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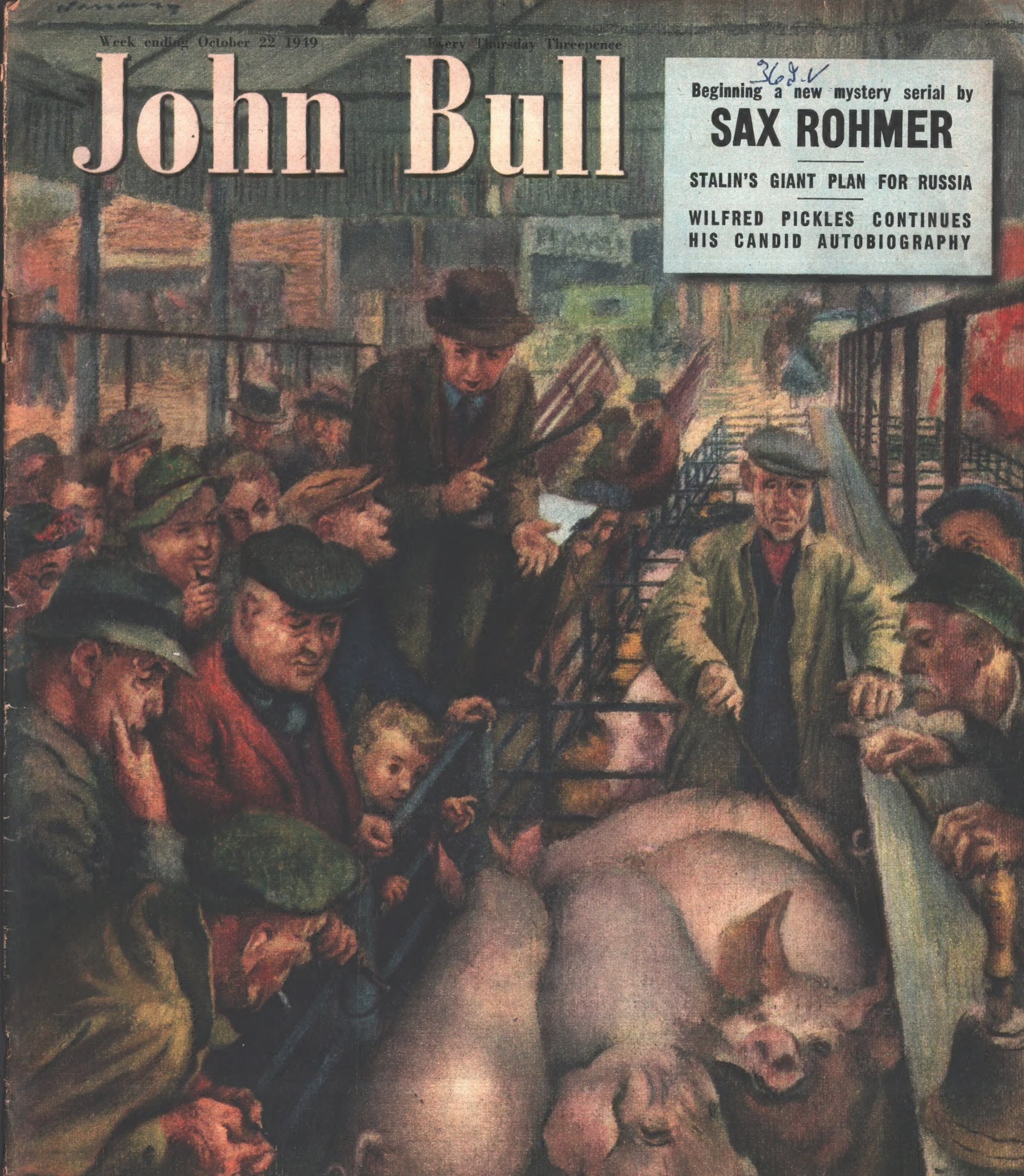

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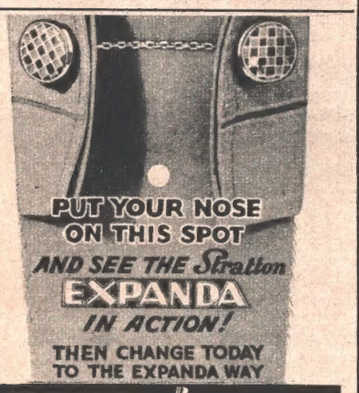
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EDITORIAL

The atom race we want to win

NOW THAT THE FIRST repercussions of the news that Russia can make atom bombs have died away, let us look at the other side of the atom.

We are assured by leading scientists that it can have peaceful uses as well as warlike ones. But the scientists, alas, are working where the money they need for experiment is available—and that is in the service of the world's war departments.

"Bigger and better" bombs are frequent news in America. If the Russians decide that this sort of thing is good propaganda, we shall get the same announcements from them. The result can be nothing but a heightening of international tensions, an increasing of dangers, a speeding up of warlike preparations.

It is greatly to be hoped that neither this Government nor any of its successors will attempt serious British competition in an atom bomb race. That would be an appalling waste of brains, materials and money.

We should concentrate our resources on peaceful tasks for the atom.

HERE is a race we *could* win. To build the first practicable economic atom-power plant would be more valuable to this country than all the weapons in the world.

It would give us a new and irresistible lead in industry. It would make us the envy of every nation.

Most great inventions start as peaceful novelties and are only later perverted to the evil uses of war. It is the greatest disaster of our time that atomic power was first harnessed for war purposes. In fact, but for the war this dangerous discovery might not have been developed. In peacetime enough money and resources would scarcely have been available to turn atomic theory into practice.

It took six years' work—following two decades of theoretical research—and five hundred million pounds to make the bombs which fell on Japan.

It is not disclosed exactly how much money this country is spending now on experiments and plant, but, since we start with the atom already split, is it too much to hope that a few more years' work will see power flowing from it into our factories?

What do the experts say?

Professor N. F. Mott forecasts that an atomic power station will be working by 1958, and he points out that it is already possible to heat water.

Professor Sir N. Haworth forecasts an atomic motor car "sooner than most people expect it."

But Sir John Cockcroft, director of our research at Harwell, says: "No—a safe atomic engine would be far too heavy for cars, but it might perhaps be used in ships." He says that experimental power plants will be working in three or four years' time.

The general opinion seems to be that another ten years of progress, at most, will see us controlling the atom for peaceful purposes. Let's hope it does not take so long.

THE organization now exists. It is only a question of how we use it.

The Atomic Energy Research Establishment at Harwell, and the other Government atomic projects are working steadily on their limited budgets. Production of the vital plutonium powder from uranium was first announced from Harwell last March.

At Preston a great uranium smelting plant takes the raw mineral pitchblende and extracts uranium from it.

Not far away is the Warrington atomic engineering establishment, devising elaborate equipment.

And farther north, at Sellafield on the Cumberland coast, stands the climax of all these preparations—the new atomic furnaces. These great and formidable buildings, each 120 feet high with a 460-foot chimney, are costing £7,000,000. What is achieved within their concrete walls may well settle the economic future of us all.

The search for new sources of uranium is spreading all over the Commonwealth and Colonies. To encourage it, the Ministry of Supply offers 13s. 9d. a pound for all the concentrated uranium oxide anyone cares to bring it.

No doubt the Commonwealth and Empire will soon be self-supporting for uranium. There are known to be large deposits, especially in Africa. For a long time to come, most of it will pass through Preston.

A splendid and hopeful by-product of the atomic drive is already doing good. These are the radio-active materials now flowing into medical use. Tiny quantities swallowed with food, and followed with the Geiger counter or atom-detector, travel about in the human body and thus reveal its innermost functions.

WE wish good luck to all the clever and learned people who are working for Britain on the secrets of the atom. But we would remind them, as well as the British public, that in Gloucestershire a faked "blitz-village" has been built . . . in imitation of one which has been blasted by an atom bomb. It is part of the new atomic A.R.P. research.

Now then—is the atom to be a matter of A.R.P., or of £.s.d. and a better life for us all?

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THE WORLD'S BEST NIGHTCAP

P.735A

"Cloth ears— that's what John's got!"

I TOLD JOHN TO INSIST ON VIM—AND HE GOT SOME OTHER WRETCHED CLEANER
WHY SO INSISTENT ON VIM, DEAR?
ONLY VIM'S QUICK ENOUGH FOR ME—I'VE TRIED THEM ALL!
WELL, YOUR KITCHEN BEATS MINE FOR GOOD LOOKS!
THAT'S THE BEAUTY OF VIM. SHIFTS GREASE IN A FLASH—KEEPS THINGS SMOOTH TOO! I ALWAYS INSIST ON VIM!

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Free Speech

TALKED OUT OF CHURCH

KNOWING THAT MORNING service was to be held at a certain Downland church, we planned our Sunday hike accordingly. But, although we arrived at the church just before eleven, no bell was summoning the village to prayer.

Inside the church sat a solitary worshipper. Before we could join him the rector bounded towards us saying: "No one has turned up. Do you want a service?" The solitary one obviously did not count.

Now, to decide the fate of a morning service is a weighty responsibility. We said it did not matter and made off. Before we were outside the church, two more hikers appeared. Apparently they had the same reception and walked away.

Had the rector started his service, at least five of us would have joined in. Lay folk are often regarded as apathetic, but are the clergy above reproach?—L. E. R., Sussex.

Home On Two Wheels

THIS UNUSUAL contraption was photographed by my husband when the owner stopped outside our gate. He said he was cycling to Leek, in Staffordshire. The umbrella affair lets down and, with the rest of the oddments, provides a fully equipped shelter for the night.—MRS. L. WOOD, 314 Nottingham Road, Ripley, Derby.

Cost Of Refereeing

RICHARD COLLIER'S ARTICLE "It's Easy To Boo The Referee" (JOHN BULL, September 24) mentions £5 5s. per match as the payment for top-line referees. This sounds good but against it must be set the cost of meals every Saturday, replacement of kit, laundering, membership and subscription fees and income tax. A referee is fortunate if he averages £3 3s. for a match and he never gets more than thirty matches a season.—REFEREE, Yorkshire.

Making Roads Safer

I SHOULD LIKE TO ADD to the many good points made in your leading article on road safety (JOHN BULL, September 17). In my experience as a garage man, half the cars I handle have defective brakes or steering and most owners are unaware of these faults.

There should be a six-monthly test of road worthiness and a two-yearly driving test.—W. CROSBIE, 10 Clevedon Crescent Lane, Glasgow.

. . . Crossing a busy street, I noticed two small children waiting on the kerb. It occurred to me that most children are too shy to ask for help, but if we adults would pause in our hurry to see other people's children safely across the roads much heartache would be avoided.—A. P. CHAPMAN, 334 Uxbridge Street, Burton-on-Trent.

. . . For thirty-six years I have been driving heavy goods lorries and I doubt the value of the Highway Code.

For example, on page five it says: "Keep well to the left unless you are about to overtake or turn right." But this means that a small car following a lorry cannot be seen or see any signals.

After a long dry spell, the road surface is exceptionally greasy for half an hour after rain. When approaching crossroads ears are wanted more than eyes and if you blow your horn all the time you cannot hear the other fellow. Experienced drivers know these hints but they are not in the code.

Sixty per cent of its text should be replaced by photographs showing real road conditions.—ALFRED MCKEON, 77 Asbridge Street, Lodge Lane, Liverpool.

How To Beat Polio

MRS. RIDOUT'S ARTICLE describing her magnificent fight against infantile paralysis (JOHN BULL, September 24) prompted me to write to you because I was first afflicted with this disease thirty-five years ago, when I was six.

My right leg was completely paralysed, but as a boy I rode a bicycle, went through the normal schools and entered an engineering shop, working my way through the usual stages of tea boy, rivet heater, etc., to become a blacksmith, plater and electric welder.

During these years, I had several motor cycles and eventually drove a car with a gadget (which I designed myself) fixed to the clutch and brake pedal to enable me to drive with one foot. I made my own caliper for the first time when I was eighteen and have done so ever since. Now, with two others, I am building our own engineering works.—POLIO, Nottingham.

Are Children Cold-blooded?

EX-HEADMASTER, WHO COMPLAINS that children are cold-blooded towards their parents and home ("Free Speech," October 1) showed no imagination. Who knows how much mother love was behind the child's phrase, "She looks after us"? Who can know for certain the feelings of the child who described home in the words, "It has a door"?

What a symbol! The door wide open to receive the well-loved, but locked against trouble—and headmasters who don't understand children.—E. N. KELLY, Adamroyd, Todmorden, Lancs.

. . . The master was to blame for holding his one-minute tests. The Civil Service once had such a test in which catch questions were printed in a book, one on each page. A page had to be turned on the stroke of a bell, at two-minute intervals. Fear of the closure dominates the mind, and it was a test of slickness and nerve, rather than intelligence.—EX-TEACHER, London, S.W.9.

Spanish Music Lesson

AFTER READING DENNIS HOLMAN'S article on Be-Bop (JOHN BULL, August 6), I wonder how many of the "Bop Gospellers" will be able to produce the emotion, the depth of feeling and the soul-searching qualities of a gipsy voice and a Spanish guitar. In Andalusia, our *cante flamenco* really is music from the soul and dates back many years.

Music of the Be-Bop style can be compared with the weeds that spring up in a beautiful garden. After a short, flourishing life, they end their days on the compost heap.—EVARISTO LAGUNA CONDE, Mallol, 11, Seville, Spain.

John Bull welcomes readers' views, experiences and ideas for publication. A guinea is paid for every letter used. Mark the envelope "Free Speech" and make sure your full name and address is in the letter.

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One Bob Martin's once a day will provide, in carefully balanced proportions, those substances which help a dog to enjoy life, to be frisky and friendly—because he's really fit.

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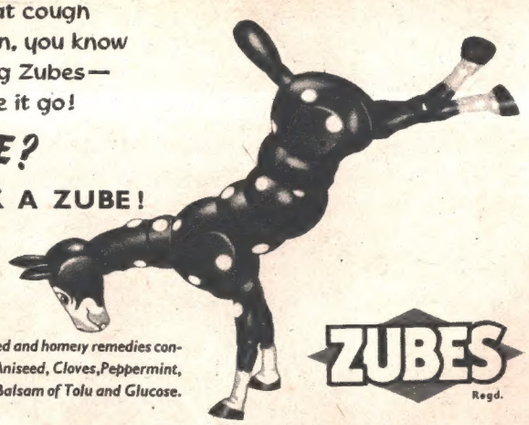

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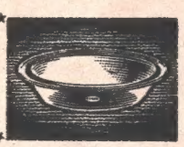
"Why I prefer oven-cooking"

by Patricia Seymour

I ALWAYS cook as many things as possible in the oven whenever I have it going. Oven-cooking is the easiest thing in the world—that is, if you have 'Pyrex' brand oven glassware to help you.

This glass ovenware retains the heat, so you get an even-all-through tender cooking—the full flavour and natural juices are all held in. And you take the dish *straight* to the table, where it looks *lovely*. Washing-up is so easy, too, with no sticky saucepans to wash. 'Pyrex' brand ovenware is *invaluable* to *every* housewife.

Three dishes in one! Lid of 'Pyrex' brand casserole makes another dish. 1¾ pint size, 6/-.



Perfect for milk puddings and fruit pies, this 'Pyrex' brand pie-dish. 1½ pint size, 3/6.

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STALIN'S GIANT PLAN TO TRANSFORM RUSSIA

by EDWARD CRANKSHAW

The rolling, windswept steppes will be neatly parcelled up and the conservative peasant will fill a new rôle. The Stalin Plan is vital to the Stalin Régime. What does it involve?

Russian woman gathers in the harvest: she can live mostly on bread—but not the town worker

THE GRANDIOSE fifteen-year plan to change the face of the Russian steppe is now celebrating the end of its first year, and the Soviet Press is letting itself go in the manner reserved for great occasions.

It seems strange that an enterprise on a colossal scale, an enterprise designed not only to do away with famine in Russia, but also to prove to 200,000,000 fellow-human beings that they are absolute masters of nature, should be practically unknown to the rest of us. But so it is.

On the face of it the plan is simply a mighty project, full of those breathless statistics so dear to Russian Communists, to conserve and improve the food-producing value of the open, rolling steppe-lands by altering the very face of nature.

Feeding The New Towns

The object of this is to lessen the striking power of the terrible droughts which periodically afflict the richest land in the Soviet Union, thus doing away with the danger of famine, and, at the same time, to feed the new towns. But there is more behind it than that, and in effect the scheme is best considered as the first serious attempt to make good the damage, physical and moral, done twenty years ago by the brutal and costly process of enforced collectivization.

The conservative, fatalistic Russian peasant, who for centuries has shrugged his shoulders in face of every natural disaster and who for the last two decades has been engaged in a grim and silent struggle with the Government, has got to be made to feel that, in fact, the Government is on his side, and that with the Government on his side he, the new Soviet man, can do all things, even to making the desert blossom like the rose.

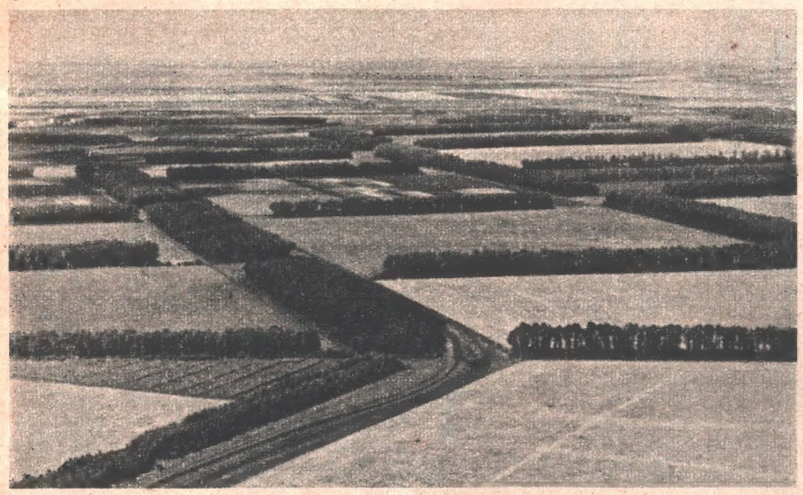
The success of the scheme would do that, the Party thinks. At the same time, in order to make the scheme succeed, the peasants have to be convinced that the Communist teaching is a liberating force, that the ancient, fatalistic attitude has been exploded, and that, given the will and the light of Stalin, there is nothing that man cannot do to improve his lot.

Giving The People Faith

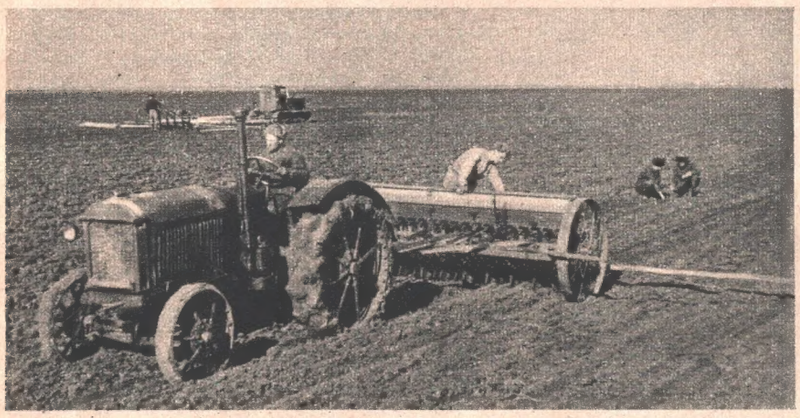
This is the motive behind a great deal that has lately seemed very odd in Russia. The notorious Lysenko affair, for example, was not a purely academic quarrel between two conflicting biological theories.

Lysenko has been turned into a national hero for the simple reason that by denying the absolute influence of heredity he gives quasi-scientific backing to the Kremlin's drive to give the people new faith in themselves. This, too, is behind all the Soviet ballyhoo claiming that almost every invention under the sun, from the wireless to penicillin, was really made in Russia.

So it is clear that there is more to the Stalin Plan to remake nature than a purely agricultural experiment. And it is hardly an



The steppes as Stalin wants them: forest belts act as windbreakers



Onset of mechanization on Russian farms is leading to a soil crisis

exaggeration to say that the future of the régime depends on its success.

The scheme falls broadly into three parts. The first part is the planting of trees on a huge scale as windbreaks across the vast, rolling, windswept steppe-lands south and south-east of Moscow. The second part is the afforestation of large tracts of sandy waste. The third part is the introduction of a new sort of crop-rotation, on the system known here as ley-farming.

By far the most spectacular part, though not the most important, is the planting of forest belts running on each side of the great rivers of the steppe—Dnieper, Don, Donetz, Volga, Ural, and their tributaries, all draining into the Black Sea or the Caspian.

Some of these strips, less than a hundred yards wide, are planned to run without interruption for three or four hundred miles. These will form the main skeleton of a great system of windbreaks designed to resist the sweeping winds from Siberia.

Within this main skeleton there will be planted an elaborate network of minor belts, calling for countless millions of saplings, to break up the open farm land into innumerable large fields, so that the traditional steppe-land scene, with no hedges and very few trees, will be totally transformed.

Main object of these windbreaks is to keep top-soil from blowing away in summer drought and to keep the snow from blowing away in winter.

So far in Russia, soil conservation has not presented an acute problem because for centuries the primitive ploughs have merely scratched the surface and the cropping has been poor.

But today, with mechanization and deep ploughing, with the striving to improve the yield (even now the yield per acre is only a fraction of the English yield and still a great deal lower than even the Canadian and American), the immensely fertile top-soil of the famous black-earth zone is being seriously disturbed for the first time in history.

And this means danger. Danger of a repetition of the disastrous American experience, where thousands of square miles of fertile soil in the dust-bowl areas have been blown away into thin air, leaving virtual desert.

Snow As Life-saver

The conservation of winter snow, on the other hand, may seem strange to us. But everywhere in Russia, and above all in the steppe, it is of the very first importance. For it is on the melting snows that the Russians depend to keep up the water-table in their great treeless spaces.

The steppe, which has the most fertile soil in Russia, also has the most difficult climate. Summer drought may burn up the crops.

It is the melting snow which replenishes the springs. Yet, in a few days' hard blow from the east, two feet of tightly packed snow may be blown away, like the top-soil in the dust-bowl, leaving nothing but an icy powdering behind.

Thus, this tree-planting scheme—the breaking up of the open steppe into innumerable fields and the setting up of hundreds of afforestation stations and tree nurseries to provide the millions of saplings required—is plainly important enough in itself. But, even so, it is less important than the less spectacular change-over to ley-farming.

For this, if it can be done, could mean a revolution in Russian agriculture just as radical and far more fruitful—perhaps, too, more enduring—than the collectivization itself.

Ley-farming means abandoning the old system of dividing land into arable and permanent pastures. Instead of permanent pastures it goes in for temporary pastures, or leys; so that, in effect, grass for stock to graze is treated as part of the crop rotation.

Every so often the arable is sown down to grass for grazing and later ploughed up again for grain and roots, then once more sown to grass. And so on. In this way, not only does all the land benefit from being trodden and manured by the stock when it is under grass, but the pastures themselves are improved by being broken up and resown, thus making for higher milk and meat yields. Finally, this system, by packing and enriching the top-soil, is itself a safeguard against wind-erosion.

Peasants Will Resent It

The Russian peasant, however, will bitterly resist the idea of turning his most cherished strips of arable into unproductive grassland.

In that last phrase, "unproductive grassland," lies the key to the whole Stalin Plan—the key to the whole Russian problem.

Since the beginning of time the Russian peasant (and until the Revolution eighty per cent of all Russians were peasants) has lived above all on grain—wheat and rye made into bread; buckwheat made into porridge; and, for a famine crop, millet. His staple vegetable has been cabbage for soup and pickled cucumbers for luxury.

Meat, butter and milk have played only the smallest part in his diet. For cooking-fat he has used the oil of sunflower seeds.

The proportion of grain foods in the ordinary diet is the best index of the standard of living. In bad times since the Revolution it has been virtually 100 per cent in Russia; in the best times, never lower than seventy per cent. In America, on the other hand, it was about thirty per cent just before the last war.

Thus the whole Russian farming effort has been the cultivation of grain. Livestock of all kinds have been neglected. After the collectivization, when the peasants killed their animals rather than give them up to the Government, the animal population, already proportionately low, fell drastically. Even in 1940 there were fewer horses, cattle and sheep on the farms than in 1928. Then came the ravages of the German invasion.

The Russian peasants, left to themselves today, would struggle along, planning their patches of wheat and rye and potatoes for their own consumption, and selling any surplus. That sort of thing was all right when the peasants formed eighty per cent of the population. But they are now only half the population, and they have to feed not only themselves but the hugely expanded town populations.

It was this necessity which forced the Government to collectivize and mechanize in the late twenties, regardless of the immediate cost. And it is this necessity, persisting, which is one of the main motives behind the great plan for the steppe. The change-over to ley-farming is intended above all to increase the communally owned livestock, not only for the meat and milk and fats, but also to improve the crop-yields.

Food For Technicians

The Russian peasant can live on two or three pounds of bread per day and nothing else. The Russian unskilled labourer in the towns can do the same.

But this is not the sort of diet to produce alert, fast-working and enthusiastic technicians and skilled workers. And if the new industrial economy of Russia is not to break down for sheer lack of well-nourished brains, somehow or other the urban diet must be improved.

Thus it was that, soon after the announcement of the Stalin Plan, there was issued a new decree concerning livestock breeding—a decree calculated to abolish in time the old inefficient peasant economy of two acres and a cow, the cow fed on grass verges and commonland in summer and often nearly starved to death in winter.

Gradually, by the look of it, the peasants are to be discouraged from keeping their own stock on their own private plots; and the collectives are to be forced to build up healthy herds to take their place—herds which will have to graze on the collective land, which, until now, has been predominantly arable.

Then, and only then, can Russia hope to build herself up a stock-breeding industry on a scale large enough to give the skilled workers in the towns the diet they are apt to demand.

And, to do this, the Russian peasant, himself treated on the collectives very much as a food-producing machine for the Government—which takes its fixed percentages of produce for the towns, regardless of the size of the harvest—must be induced by hook or by crook to revolutionize his whole conception of farming, which for centuries has consisted of raising poor crops of grain from all available land and feeding odd animals on the wastes.

Period Of Self-denial

He has now to give up valuable land, in the form of temporary leys, and valuable food, in the form of a proportion of his food-crops, for the feeding of stock, with the knowledge that most of the resultant meat and milk and butter and cheese will go to the towns. At any rate at first.

In the long run, this process could revolutionize his whole standard of living, and he too would benefit, like the townsman, from more and better and more varied food. The problem for the Government is to force him through the short run. And that, more than anything, is what the great Stalin Plan is about.

Kennedy's powerful headlights cut through the mist as he swung between the gates. Already, he noticed, some of the guests had started to leave

HANGOVER HOUSE

Starting a New Mystery Serial

by SAX ROHMER

ILLUSTRATED BY SEABRIGHT

"No! For the last time—*no*!"

The girl sat stiffly upright on the side of the bed, the receiver to her ear; her eyes watching the closed door. Her softly rounded chin hardened and she shook her head.

A trunk and several suitcases, half packed, lay open on the floor. All sorts of intimate personal things were littered about the room.

The pleading voice of a man at the other end of the line brought no tenderness, no hint of relenting, into the girl's grey eyes.

"You are only wasting your time," she said, coldly—"and mine. I didn't even know you were in England. . . . No, I didn't open your letters. They are destroyed, unread. Don't send me any more."

Another appeal, spoken in tones deep with emotion; but she interrupted:

"Now you are trying to excuse yourself. I don't want to see you. I know you, at last, through and through."

The pleading voice at the other end went on. She clapped her free hand sharply over the mouthpiece as someone knocked at the door.

"Don't come in!" she called. "I will ring when I'm ready."

The knocking stopped. She spoke again hurriedly, in a low voice, into the phone:

"You are driving me to desperation. You know what that means. All right I will meet you, somewhere, later tonight, but it must be for the last time. Quick! Tell me where I can call you."

She was scribbling something on a pad when the door opened and a woman came in. The girl on the phone hung up, and turned around.

"Elfie!" she exclaimed, "we can't go! It's too late!"

Elfie, a woman of fifty, wore workman-like slacks and had a spotted handkerchief tied over her hair. She closed the door and stood with her back to it.

"Quiet, dear!" she whispered. "Your father's here!"

"Father! . . . *here?*"

Elfie nodded. "And I have a feeling he suspects."

"But I can't possibly see him! Elfie, Elfie! Tell him something—tell him anything. But get him to go away! Oh, my God! What am I going to *do* . . . ?"

TORM KENNEDY had had a tiring day.

Every day was a tiring day. His Service record had brought him plenty of work on his return to private life. Although established for only two years in his new profession, he had already been entrusted with several delicate inquiries.

It was close on ten o'clock. He had dined alone and had no intention of going out again. Wearing a comfortably old dressing-gown, his pipe well alight, and a drink at his elbow, he sat in a deep armchair, reading. Around him, on the shelves of his cosy study, were many technical volumes, ranging from *Forensic Medicine* to books on the latest method of tabulating finger-prints. But the working day had closed. He was reading *Huckleberry Finn*. The flat was very quiet. Then, faintly, he heard the doorbell.

He paid no attention. After all, he was seeing nobody tonight.

Footsteps. Silence again. More footsteps, a rap on the door, and Sergeant Whittaker, his granite-faced manservant, came in. He carried a visiting card.

Kennedy laid his book down.

"Whittaker," he said sharply, "did I, or didn't I, tell you to admit no one?"

"You did tell me, sir." Whittaker was unmoved. "I thought this caller might be an exception."

He offered the card. Kennedy frowned, but picked it up.

It read, simply:

LORD GLENGALE

GUARDS CLUB. LONDON

But it meant: Major-General The Marquess of Glengale and Dumferry, V.C., D.S.O., and a long list of civil distinctions and decorations: one of the few wealthy peers still spared to the House of Lords.

Storm Kennedy glanced at Whittaker.

Peter Faraway raised frightened eyes. Kennedy shone his torch on the dead man—and on the dagger

"What on earth can *he* want? Where is he?"

"I showed him into the office, sir. . . ."

Storm Kennedy walked to the small room he used as an office, and opened the door. Neat files; a typewriter on a side table. A severe oak desk and some leather armchairs. The only wall decorations were two signed portraits: one of Lord Wavell; the other of the Commissioner of Metropolitan Police and present chief of Scotland Yard.

A short, wiry man, his close-cut silvery hair retiring in good order from an exposed position on top of his head, stood with his back to the door, staring up at the Commissioner's picture. He wore a dinner jacket.

"Lord Glengale?"

The visitor turned quickly, and Storm Kennedy found himself being scrutinized by a pair of grey eyes set in a lined, sun-browned face.

LORD GLENGALE noted Kennedy's neatly combed wavy dark hair, approved the heavy brows and the shape of the skull, liked the frank expression and wondered what that thin mouth looked like when it smiled. Build good, too; spare but muscular. Useful hands: long fingers, wiry. Not regularly handsome by far. Bit on the rugged side.

Kennedy said: "Won't you sit down?"

Lord Glengale sat down, and Kennedy took a seat behind the desk. The disconcerting gaze remained fixed on him there.

"Got knocked out early on, didn't you? With Archie Wavell in Africa?"

"Yes." Kennedy nodded, pushing a box of cigarettes across the desk. "Sniper tried to shoot a crow, and hit me."

"So they classified you Crock A, and shoved you into Intelligence. But Jerringham tells me you did well."

"Very kind of him."

Storm Kennedy was mildly interested to learn that the Marquess had delved into his record, and wondered what he had come about.

Lord Glengale took a cigarette from the box, and Kennedy, leaning across the desk, lighted it. As he snapped out the lighter: "Since I hadn't anticipated the pleasure of your call tonight, sir, perhaps you might tell me, now, why you came?"

Lord Glengale looked pleased. He liked men who got down to business.

"What I'm going to tell you is—painfully intimate. Understand?"

"Entirely."

"Concerns my daughter, Hilary. Know her?"

Kennedy gave no sign. But the statement — wholly unforeseen — had shaken him from his mood of bored toleration. Lady Hilary Bruton! Most exquisite debutante of the postwar years. A throw-back, in some ways, to a type of wealthy society beauty who somehow seemed to have gone out with the war.

"I have met her. I can't claim to know her well."

Lord Glengale's wrinkles deepened.

"Easy looker. But poor judgment. Gets her looks from my family. Most of the Brutons stand up well. Her mother's dead, you know." Lord Glengale was obviously suffering tortures in exposing his domestic life to a stranger. "Hilary's her mother's daughter, bit of a handful. Briefly—she's in deep, somewhere."

He hesitated, painfully.

"What about a drink?" Kennedy

suggested. "I could do with one, myself."

"Thanks. Thanks very much."

Kennedy pressed a bell on the desk.

Sergeant Whittaker entered, as if he had been standing outside the door, carrying a tray on which were bottles, a crystal jug, a soda water siphon and a bowl of ice. Setting the tray down:

"Whisky, milord?" he inquired.

Glengale glanced up at him.

"With water. No ice."

He was served. A Scotch and soda was placed before Kennedy. Whittaker set the tray on a convenient side table and withdrew, silently.

"Good man, that," said the Marquess. He raised his glass. "All the best."

He resumed: "Hilary's of age; lives her own life. Can't keep her locked up in Dumferry. Hate London, myself. Used to love it. Never be the same. Well, she stays in town a lot with her aunt, my late wife's sister. Damned old fool, but sound stock. Now she's in some sort of bad trouble. Want someone to keep an eye on her."

He paused and went on fiercely: "Understand, want her protected. I tell you she's in deep—involved with some blackguard, in a big way. You don't know Hilary as I do. If anybody got her cornered, by God! I think she's capable of killing him—or trying to."

Lord Glengale suddenly stood up again.

"Believe I know the man. If these were my grandfather's times, I'd shoot him out of hand. Other days, other ways. Came up to make a few inquiries. Found the man I'm talking about an hour ago, and she wouldn't see me! Lot of baggage in the lobby. Believe she was getting ready to bolt!"

Kennedy preserved a completely expressionless face. He was sincerely sorry for Lord Glengale; but what part he was expected to play in this drama of a wayward girl and an outraged parent became more and more obscure.

"Do you understand, sir," Glengale snapped out, "that apart from the estate which will be hers one day, Hilary, under her mother's will, controls a very large fortune? And do you understand, sir, that the scoundrel I suspect is married already?"

"Are you suggesting blackmail?"

"I am. And blackmail's a dangerous game to play with our lot! Overheard Hilary calling out to her aunt tonight, 'It's too late! We can't go!' Couldn't avoid hearing. Then she wouldn't see me. Tonight is some sort of climax. Know it in my bones. That girl's in desperate trouble. What can I do? Haven't the facilities to trace her. Can't go to Scotland Yard——"

Words, now, came in a torrent. This reserved, phlegmatic man was moved to the depths.

"You know all the ropes. Find out where she is. I can get no reply from her aunt's number. For heaven's sake——" His voice shook.

Storm Kennedy sighed—and stood up.

"It's a queer assignment, Lord Glengale, but I'll do my best."

Mentally, he said goodbye to Huckleberry Finn.

What strange errand had brought Lady Hilary Bruton to the fog-bound country house? Putting aside pipe and dressing-gown, Kennedy set out to discover

A DANCE band was playing. Closed doors, closed and heavily draped windows, muffled some of the sound, but the soft music which penetrated appeared distasteful to the only occupant of the room. Seated in a corner of a massive oak inglenook, beside a fireplace designed to burn mounds of wood logs, but now empty, he glanced frequently at the clock, the hands of which pointed to twenty minutes after midnight. It was an old grandfather clock, probably early Victorian, yet comparatively new beside the ancient relics around it. Ranged on open shelves, veiled in the shadows of the room, were figures, mostly imperfect, of the strange gods of the Nile: creatures part men and part ibis; part women and part moon phantasy.

There were Sekhet boats, with grotesque little dolls, like marionettes, of the dead, sailing to judgment in the ancient Egyptian Halls of Amenti. Anubis, the scribe of life's work, was there to hold the scales. Set, lord of the underworld, gaped in ferocious expectancy. Fragments of wall paintings, a reproach to modern pigments in the deathless freshness of their colouring, made a background for potsherds, enamelled jewellery, scarabs.

Beyond, out of deeper shadow, loomed crowded, untidy bookcases. On top of these were piled brass Zem Zem cups from Mecca, incense burners, old Damascus ware. Above hung scimitars, daggers, and other examples of early Oriental arms—and in the inglenook there was the man who kept glancing at the clock.

HE was perhaps, in certain respects the most interesting exhibit of all.

He had long, untidy, elfin grey hair and had neglected to shave recently, so that a whitish overtone marked the angular yellow face. His skin, in colour and texture, resembled old Persian calf. His faded velvet jacket and narrow black trousers might have belonged to the wardrobe of Charles Dickens. He carried pince-nez attached to a wide ribbon.

When not looking up at the clock, he was reading *The Times*.

A sound of smothered laughter, of swishing feet, made him glance angrily at the draped french windows. A girl and a man were dancing on the terrace, right outside.

The band stopped suddenly, in the casual manner of dance bands, and whoever was outside moved away.

The reader in the inglenook lowered his paper again.

A nervous hand was fumbling with the latch of a door immediately facing him. Slowly, hesitantly, the door opened, and someone looked into the room. Observing the frigid stare of its solitary occupant, he immediately retired, closing the door behind him.

The man in the corner glanced again at the clock, rolled *The Times* into a bundle and hurled it on the floor. Standing up, a tall, stooping figure, he opened a small cupboard in the wall. He took out a bottle, a glass and a syphon of soda water. Mixing himself a stiff whisky, he replaced bottle and syphon and resumed his seat.

He had just fixed his pince-nez in place and had unwrapped a copy of an archaeological journal when something made him put it down.

Looking up sharply, he met the fixed regard of brilliant dark eyes. A slender figure stood before him, that of a brown-skinned Egyptian who wore evening clothes, with the unusual addition of a tarboosh.

"If I intrude—" it was a gentle, musical voice—"please do not hesitate. . . ."

"I don't hesitate, sir! This room is private. Might I ask who you are?"

"I am a guest. I am called Mohammed. We are all guests in this world of shadows. Some meet with welcome. Others wander alone."

"Your remarks, sir, appear to be poor paraphrases of indifferent poets."

"No one who seeks to share with others the beauty he perceives, merits indifference. These artists, scribes and craftsmen—" one long brown hand indicated the laden shelves—"some of them men of my own land, sought to give beauty to others. Now, you are sharing their dreams."

"Indeed?"

"Some of their dreams were unlovely," the somnolent voice continued—"of vengeance, of death. There is blood on those Damascus blades. I can see it, even after the passing of centuries. But some were beautiful, effendi. In such surroundings the poet refreshes his spirit."

The pince-nez being firmly set in place, the man in the corner said: "I am obliged to you for your informative observations. And now, if you are conscious of sufficient spiritual refreshment, no doubt you will wish to rejoin the other guests?"

"I will do so, effendi." The placid speaker crossed his hands on his breast and bowed. "*Es-selâm 'alekûm.*"

"*'Aleykûm es-selâm.*"

The Egyptian moved noiselessly to the door, opened it, and went out. As the door closed behind him, the dance band began to play again.

Muttering angrily and glaring at the clock, the man in the corner got up. His newspaper under his arm and his whisky glass in his hand, he crossed to a short, oaken stair leading to an arched opening above, and went up.

Somewhere a door banged loudly.

STORM KENNEDY ran into the first serious webs of fog right on top of South Riding Hill. Knowing what this might mean, with five miles still to go, he was forced, nevertheless, to crawl. The hill was dangerous.

A picture, based upon scanty information given by Lord Glengale, was forming in his mind. With Lady Hilary as its central figure, it was not a pleasant picture. Kennedy had learned from experience to avoid deductions based upon insufficient data. But, all the same, he found it painfully hard to fit Hilary into the composition otherwise than in a poor light.

When Lord Glengale had gone, intending to spend the night at his club, Kennedy had squarely faced the responsibility he had accepted.

Having failed, as Lord Glengale had failed, to get any reply on the phone, Kennedy sent Whittaker around to the Sloane Street flat where Lady Hilary was staying, to learn what he could of her movements since Lord Glengale had called. Sergeant Whittaker was adept at this type of inquiry; and if, as was probable, the head porter proved to be a retired soldier, the matter might be counted as good as settled.

Half an hour later, Whittaker called up. Sergeant Fawcett, late Coldstream Guards, had had orders to send certain baggage for the two ladies ahead to Victoria on the following morning. It was to be put aboard the Golden Arrow Paris express, in which their seats were already reserved.

THIS order had been cancelled. The two ladies had driven off, without baggage, in Lady Hilary's car, shortly after ten thirty. Lady Hilary, who was driving, had asked the sergeant which was the best road to Lychgate, in Surrey, and he had advised her to go through King's Riding, pointing out, however, that there was a threat of fog. . . .

What on earth did this mean? Why Lychgate—wherever Lychgate might be—at ten thirty on a misty night?

Storm Kennedy found a possible explanation among unanswered mail. Subconsciously, perhaps, he had been looking for it—an invitation card.

It was from Joan Faraway, whom he knew to be a particular friend of Hilary's, bidding him attend an "austerity birthday party" to be held that night at some strange address in Surrey. "All welcome anytime between eight and eight."

Kennedy had not intended to go. Joan's "austerity parties" were out of his line. Joan, American wife of the Honourable Peter Faraway, had far too much money. The town flat was unsuitable for the sort of parties Joan loved.

She was out when he called the Mayfair number, as he had anticipated, but after some delay he heard Peter's voice, sounding comparatively sober.

"Hallo! hallo! Is that old Bill Kennedy? Hallo, Bill!"

"Hallo, Peter. Look, I want to ask you something in the very strictest

The man said, "Larry, please." Hilary cried, "Carry out your threats—if you have the courage. Now, go away." The smile faded from his face

confidence. Do you know if Hilary Bruton will be at the party tonight?"

"What party, dear boy?"

"Joan's party, at some place in Surrey." He tried to lay his hand on the invitation card. "Birthday party."

"Good Lord! So glad you called me. I'd clean forgotten it!"

"Whose birthday is it?"

"Well—I'm a bit unsure, but I think it's mine. What day is it?"

"Thursday, the twenty-third."

"Oh—then it must be Joan's. Thanks awfully for reminding me, Bill. Did you say you were bringing Hilary Bruton?"

"I didn't say I was bringing her. I asked if she would be there."

"Oh, yes. I seem to remember Joan saying so. By Jove! I must fly! Expect you and Hilary about eleven, then. . . ."

But it was long past the hour suggested by the woolly-headed Peter when Kennedy came at last to Hangover House. . . .

The fog had grown steadily worse with every mile he covered. A number of cars creeping warily through the gloom had passed him during the last mile, which lay along an unfrequented road. He strongly suspected that they were those of Joan's departing guests and that the party had broken up, but he went ahead. An unaccountable foreboding was settling down upon him. He recalled something Lord Glengale had said: "Tomorrow may be too late. . . ."

ONCE more the door of that strange museum-like room was opened, gently, and a woman looked in. Finding the room empty, she moved quietly and calmly to the telephone, which was on a desk littered with papers.

Her movements had an Oriental languor; she wore a backless gown and her bare arms and shoulders gleamed like mellowed ivory. A clear profile, small nose and chin, and petulant mouth, outlined against a fragment of wall-painting, resembled the profiles of Syrian captives depicted there kneeling before Pharaoh.

She dialled a number and waited, long, dark eyes turning sometimes towards the closed door, and sometimes towards the shadowy stair.

Evidently there was no reply. The tip of her silver sandal tapped the floor impatiently. She hung up, and then dialled again, with care.

The dance band in an adjoining room crashed into a perfunctory and abbreviated playing of "God Save the King," so that the woman listening on the phone failed to hear a faint sound coming from the draped french windows. A sudden chill of colder night air made her shiver slightly. She glanced over her shoulder. But she could see nothing to account for the draught.

Nevertheless, only a moment before, brown fingers had parted the faded velvet draperies, and dark eyes—eyes dark as her own—had looked in. A shaft of dim light, reflected from a lamp in the inglenook, had touched, briefly, the outline of a fez.

Muttering impatiently, she put the receiver back and turned to go. The draperies hung undisturbed. She actually had her hand on the door knob when the door began to open. She stepped aside—a swift, lithe movement.

A man came in, a man who peered short-sightedly through the thick lenses of his glasses. He wore full evening dress and his white piqué bow was slightly soiled. His fair hair lay plastered inertly back and he had a moustache so neat and narrow that it might have been drawn with a pen.

"Oh, I say!" He pulled up. "Am I intruding?"

"Not at all!" The woman flashed him a brilliant smile. "As a matter of fact, I think I am the intruder, in here. I was looking for—someone."

She had a faint, unusual accent.

"Perhaps I can help you."

"Well—I have been trying to find our hostess ever since I came. But she seems to have vanished."

The man adjusted his bow, nervously.

"Someone told me—I forget who it was—that Mrs.—er—Faraway, had rushed off in a huff. Fed up with Peter. He's at his old tricks again."

The woman laughed. Her laughter, like her voice, had a husky, caressing quality.

"I should have thought Joan was used to it by now. But champagne always went to her head. Quite a lot of the crowd have left, though, isn't it so?"

"Undoubtedly." There was at times a pompous note in the man's voice. "I was looking for you. A heavy fog is coming on, and I was wondering—er—if I could offer you a lift back to town."

"That is very sweet of you. But I have ordered a car to call for me, Mr.—er—"

"Lovelace." The nervous tie habit was displayed again. "Allen Lovelace."

"I know the band has gone, Mr. Lovelace. . . ."

"Bar's shutting down, too."

"*That* is tragic! Do you think, if we hurried . . .?"

They went out, closing the door behind them.

As if this had been a signal—which, in fact, to him it may have been—the man in the velvet jacket materialized at the top of the stair. He came down, and crossed to the inglenook, an archaeological journal under his arm and an empty glass in his hand.

The glass he refilled, opening his small cupboard for the purpose and then carefully reclosing it. From somewhere outside, beyond, came a racket of starting engines, hooters, voices. He glanced once more at the clock, growled, and sat down.

Throwing the journal aside, and setting his glass on a ledge, he leaned back in the corner and closed his eyes. . . .

Someone was running along the terrace outside, shouting, "Sidonia! Where are you? We'll never make town! Sidonia!"

The man in the room crossed to close and fasten the windows, then, returning to the inglenook, he picked up his glass and walked across to the stair. From a switch on the newel post he extinguished all the lights, except one standard lamp near the window, evidently not controlled from that point, and went stumbling up the dark stairway.

A cacophony of motor horns and one shattering back-fire made the night hideous. But no one intruded upon this sanctum of dead civilizations until a hand quietly opened the door which Mr. Lovelace had closed.

Mohammed looked in, cautiously. Finding the room unoccupied, he entered. He walked silently to the draped windows, and realizing that they were fastened, unlatched them. He slipped out into the mist, and dropped the draperies behind him. . . .

LADY HILARY BRUTON sat staring straight before her with wide-open, haunted eyes.

Her dress, a simple dinner frock, was dove grey, and harmonized artfully with her eyes. She sat on an old-fashioned leather couch.

She had come in a moment before through a half-glazed and curtained door which opened on a corner of the terrace.

"Elfie—he isn't there!"

Elfie said: "It's the fog."

Hilary's fingers clutched the worn leather of the couch.

"I never felt so—so desperate, in all my life. I had worked myself up for this interview—this—ghastly interview. Twice, now, I have come to meet him, feeling more and more like a worm, and he hasn't been there." She sprang to her feet. "Is he—daring to—play with me?"

"Be calm, dear. Try to relax." The deep voice was meant to soothe. "I tell you it's the fog. . . ."

"I say he's doing it deliberately!"

"Whichever it is, stick to your guns. Tell him where he gets off. And if he has the courage—which he hasn't—to do what he threatened, face the music. I'll face it with you."

"You may be right," Hilary admitted, unhappily. "He may not have been able to get here."

"And *we* mayn't be able to get back, if we hang around much longer! Nearly everybody's gone. God knows what's become of Joan. And that ape, Peter, is all roped up with that awful singer from the band."

"I'll go down and take one more look. If he isn't there now, I shall have to give it up. How I hate the very thought of speaking to him!"

"Pity you didn't hate the thought earlier on, Hilary. Heaven be my witness, *I* told you what he was."

"I know, Elfie—I know. But I just couldn't see through him—in time."

"It's never too late."

"Elfie, it's sheer blackmail, now! Oh, *what* a fool I've been! I wish he were *dead*! I could *kill* him!"

Elfie nodded understandingly.

"Well, pop off and have a go, dear. I'll scout around again and try to keep anybody we know out of the way till you've done the deed."

And she had been gone no more than ten seconds when the half-glazed doorway behind Hilary opened, and a man came in out of the fog. Hilary twisted around and faced him.

"Larry!" he whispered, and held his hands out, beseechingly. "I have found you."

He was, by crude standards, a strikingly handsome man, in the late thirties, with a tall, athletic figure, and face deeply browned by the sun. His dark hair, attractively silvered at the temples, his regular features, might have satisfied a Hollywood casting director.

Hilary, breathing quickly, stood watching him, her small black handbag tucked under her arm. She had turned pale.

"I had given you up," she said coldly.

The smile faded from his brown face.

"It seems to me that you *want* to give me up altogether," he said.

"I have told you so. You must admit I have a good reason. There's only one thing more you can do for me. Go away."

"Larry! After all that's happened! There's nothing I can't explain. . . ."

"Stop!" Hilary's hands were white-knuckled fists. "I shall *not* listen to you. You forced this meeting on me. I have nothing to say except that I never want to see you again. Carry out your threats—if you have the courage. And now, go away."

"Larry! Larry! You shall, you must listen!"

He took another step forward and threw his arm around her shoulders. She grew rigid.

"Let me go!" cried Hilary. "Do you hear me? I warn you, if you don't. . . ."

Footsteps approached the door.

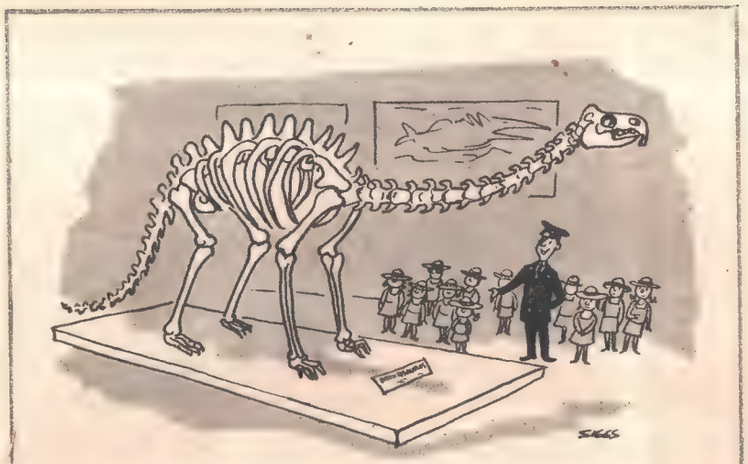
"I believe I left my wrap somewhere," said a girl's voice.

"Come out here!" said Hilary, sharply. "Quick! You mustn't be found in this room with me."

She went swiftly through the curtained doorway, which now admitted slowly writhing fog wraiths. The man followed. . . .

Meanwhile, on the road, two other

Continued on page 29



"In this instance a stray bone got mounted by mistake. I wonder now . . . can any of you spot which one it was?"

THE HUMAN MACHINE

Just Step Outside!

MANY people suffer from claustrophobia, the fear of enclosed spaces. It is a well-known mental ailment.

Today more and more people seem to suffer from a fear of enclosed lives. That, too, is becoming a well-known mental ailment. Anyone who looks at the mess the world is in and says hopelessly: "What's the use?" is a victim.

It's a sort of mental and spiritual asthma that can make life quite a burden.

The cure isn't hard. If you feel shut in—step out! It's just as easy as that. You're your own jailer. No one else is.

Do something, make something, grow something, create something, try something you've never done before. Develop fresh interests. Learn something new.

There are millions of doors out from an enclosed life—and they're none of them locked. Push some of them open. Go on! Just step outside and see!

by ROFFE THOMPSON

SHE PUTS BABIES ON THEIR FEET

by LAWRENCE EARL

Weak children grow stronger. Healthy ones forget their fears. It's all done by exercises—plus something else

THE FIRST TIME Elizabeth H. was brought into the clinic even the nurse, whose duty it was to fill in her chart, turned pale. Aged twelve months and unable to sit or stand, the child lay almost formless within her shawl. When she was picked up her head lolled helplessly on her shoulders until it seemed her neck would snap with the strain.

Suffering from an ailment which transforms children into pitifully hunch-backed dwarfs with shortened limbs and outsize heads, Elizabeth already had the first ominous signs of a hump on her back. But that was more than three years ago. The other day I saw her as she is now. Four and a half years of concentrated energy, she burst into the room dressed only in a pair of white cotton pants. With a strong, straight back and her head proudly erect, she had the easy confidence of an athlete.

In my hands were the grotesque photographs taken on her arrival at the clinic. I could scarcely believe my eyes at the change, for although as long as she lives Elizabeth's body will be too small and her head too large, she has escaped the curse of becoming a hunchback.

The key to this near miracle, and hundreds like it, is in a modest London clinic, equipped as a miniature gymnasium, and in Mrs. Estrid Dane, the serene, white-haired woman who runs it. Fifty-eight years old and a grandmother, she seems possessed of eternal youth—which probably springs from her fanatical belief that all babies should have her special exercises.

Mrs. Dane coaxes a child into a muscle-strengthening game. At first she had to face medical hostility

They Must Begin Young

"These," she says, "help them to develop straight bones and strong muscles, normal metabolism, good blood circulation, well-developed lungs, a perfect digestive apparatus, an alert mind and a happy, confident spirit. They give a lasting foundation to a lifetime of health."

Even if babies are born with defects, says Mrs. Dane, most can be corrected or materially helped when bones are soft and pliable. To accomplish this, exercises must begin during the first year of a child's life, preferably when it is three months old.

All this seems to cover a lot of ground. But Mrs. Dane has in the past few years given her six months' course, always without a fee and never without the approval of a doctor, to more than 2,000 children of the rich, the poor and the in-between.

With the help and encouragement of many doctors, the financial backing of the British War Relief Society of America, and the personal beneficence of Gilbert H. Carr, a wealthy American living in London, she has, since 1939, worked first in the training centre of a well-known pediatrician, then in welfare centres in Westminster, Lewisham and Plaistow. Though she now operates her own clinic, backed by the B.W.R.S., in North Kensington, this is not enough for Mrs. Dane.

Scepticism Is A Barrier

Her ultimate aim is to train hundreds of young women of every colour and nationality to carry on her work, have it recognized as a profession all its own, and spread it as a free gift throughout the world. She realizes that, like Florence Nightingale before her, she must first overcome natural barriers of disbelief and envy.

"And I will do it," she says. "I, a Dane, during the war introduced a German system with British children financed by American money. You see, it was international almost from the beginning."

Already she has accomplished much towards achieving her ambition. In 1943, while working in Lewisham, she trained her first student, Gwynn

Pulling herself up from the floor. Result: a straight back in later years

Williams, who later went to Salford to carry on Mrs. Dane's work.

By then the astounding results of her exercises on fit and ailing babies were beginning to attract Press notice and other girls came asking to be taught. Carefully choosing those with special aptitude for the job, Mrs. Dane took on a few at a time.

Later, at Plaistow, Mrs. Guy Clutten-Brock one day brought her eleven-months-old baby, Sally, to watch Mrs. Dane at work.

"I've come just to look, if I may," she said. "My own baby is perfect and doesn't need exercises."

"That may be so," said Mrs. Dane. "But my system is not primarily designed to help only bow legs, curvature of the spine, asthma and other disorders. Even more important, it will help prevent future troubles in normal, healthy babies."

Every Muscle Is Used

At first doubtful, then fascinated, Mrs. Clutten-Brock watched the baby patients hanging by their hands, necks and ankles from trapeses. She saw them swing on ropes, arch their strong little backs like adults doing swallow dives, with feet planted firmly on Mrs. Dane's chest and her hands gripping their thighs. Chuckling with undisguised delight, they were put through their athletic paces by the white-clad, slender Danish woman who saw to it that they exercised every muscle in their tough little bodies.

After the demonstration, Mrs. Clutten-Brock approached Mrs. Dane once more.

"You were right," she said, "and I was wrong. Will you train my baby—and teach me how to do what you can do?"

Mrs. Dane agreed. Today, Mrs. Clutten-Brock lives in Rhodesia, where she gives the Dane course of exercises to native children. Girls from France, Czechoslovakia, Denmark and Germany have come for training.

All Clinics Are Free

Else Madsen and Hanne Kampnann now operate a clinic in Copenhagen. Barbara Clayton carries on the work at Stockport, Vera Ray in Dedisham, Sussex, and others elsewhere in Britain. Each trainee has to sign an undertaking not to practise for private gain, but only in free clinics.

Dublin and Paris have each asked for a Dane centre and her fame has preceded her system all over the world. She feels she has a long way yet to go, but Mrs. Dane has come a long way, too.

Although she has been active in her work for only ten years, her interest in special exercises for babies goes back to 1921 when she lived in Germany. Her young son Hans had weak feet and she decided to take him to an orthopaedic surgeon.

Built-up shoes and iron braces were prescribed, but, instead of showing improvement, Hans's ankles became so stiff he could hardly walk.

Gravely disturbed, Mrs. Dane found a sympathetic listener in a fellow guest at a dinner party.

"I happen to know of a man who cures such troubles with exercises," he said. "His name is Detleff Neumann-Neurode and he lives in Berlin."

Mrs. Dane rushed Hans to the German capital. "The first thing Neumann-Neurode did," she recalls, "was to throw out the boots and irons. My son was quite cured in three months."

Some years later she moved to London with her husband, Peter Dane, a naturalized Englishman. By now her children were married and had children of their own and she found herself bored with inactivity.

She recalled what Neumann-Neurode had done for her son. "Why not," she thought, "introduce his work to England?" In 1937 she returned to Berlin to study under the German expert.

Doctors Were Opposed

It is the Neumann-Neurode technique, which she has expanded and developed far beyond its original scope, that she applies to Britain's babies today.

Mrs. Dane's task of bringing recognition to her new work was, of course, neither easy nor without opposition. Little by little, she became aware of the stubborn hostility she would have to face and conquer. "I could understand the professional attitude," she says. "They said: 'Mrs. Dane is not even a doctor. She says she can work miracles. If we accept her we open the door for quacks.'

"But what I objected to was that even after the system was proved, some still made a fuss."

Then, one day, after a series of shattering setbacks, the postman brought her a letter from the British War Relief Society of America.

Mrs. Dane called at the Berkeley Square office of the society. She saw Gilbert Carr, treasurer and deputy-chairman, a white-haired Californian who had lived in London for years.

After polite, preliminary chit-chat, he suddenly leaned across the table. "Would five hundred do?" he asked.

"I'm afraid I don't understand."

"Mrs. Dane, if the Borough Council of Lewisham, where you are now working, will provide a clinic, we will give you £500 so that you can also eat and have a roof over your head."

A Cure For Bomb Shock

This was done. For the first time she was able to devote her full day to the Dane-Neumann-Neurode system. All through the heavy blitzes she applied it to the treatment of bomb-shocked children and to others.

Three times weekly mothers brought their babies to her through air raids and falling bombs. In order to treat as many as possible Mrs. Dane established a rule demanding punctuality for appointments.

In 1941 she opened two new clinics, one in Canning Town, the other in Forest Gate. Running all three without an assistant, she exercised more than fifty baby patients each day.

Her work among the children who had been unnerved by the blitz drew a great deal of attention from doctors of many lands. Once she had a demonstration for Free French medical officers and noticed an uninvited guest watching from a doorway. After the others had gone he approached.

"I am an American psychiatrist," he explained. "This is quite the best baby psychology I've ever seen. It isn't *just* exercise, is it? Obviously somehow you co-ordinate the body and the mind. But how?"

"I do it through my hands. At first the babies refuse to work. Then they co-operate but are still very dependent on me. Suddenly, one day, they discover they can do all the exercises by themselves.

"'I can do it. See what I can do!' is written plainly on their faces. Then they are confident, disciplined and happy. I do this with my hands and I can teach others to do the same."

Even today, with the memories of bomb neuroses long since past, Mrs. Dane believes that the greatest benefit children derive from her exercises is the complete elimination of fear.

"A baby who swings by his feet," she declares, "is afraid of nothing."

I saw this point demonstrated at Cruger House, her new clinic at 2 Holland Park Avenue, the other day, when John D., a sturdy three-year-old, rippling with health, did his exercises. At birth, John had had a small stroke, caused by the bursting of a vein in part of his brain.

One muscle in his neck had developed shorter than the others. He walked badly and curvature of the spine was beginning to develop when a doctor sent him to Mrs. Dane.

Fear Is Banished

There wasn't a sign of any of these troubles now as he swung, a little blond boy in a blue shirt and pants, joyously and completely without fear, from a trapese.

For five minutes, three times a week, over a period of six months, Mrs. Dane helps each baby to exercise, according to her carefully planned course. At the end of this period, the child can gleefully swing, by his hands or his feet or even the nape of his strong little neck, from a trapese bar.

The bare mechanical principle behind Mrs. Dane's exercises is that muscles, when properly controlled, may be used to straighten bones or make sure they will not later bend and bow. "A strong muscle," says Mrs. Dane, "when pressed into controlled service, first pulls the bent bone straight, then keeps it straight in a natural splint. Conversely, as long as a muscle is weak, the bone will follow it and, if left alone, grow and harden in the wrong position."

Only a few weeks ago Mrs. Dane reluctantly turned down the offer of a lectureship and Government-sponsored training school in one of London's greatest hospitals. A condition of her acceptance was that she should teach to students of ordinary massage instead of to those who will specialize only in her method.

"I remembered," she says, "that Neumann-Neurode almost killed off his own system by making this mistake. I can't afford the same error. You see, I *know* this profession will be established exactly as I see it. I have faith."

MY LIFE
by
Wilfred Pickles
Exclusive to John Bull

I join a dramatic society

My first public appearance (mother buys me a new tie). . . . Amateur acting by night, the building job in the daytime—and Mabel!

FROM THE PICKLES ALBUM . . . Wilfred, the budding actor, in a Halifax Thespians production: "As soon as work was over, I grabbed my dusty jacket and went home for a quick bite before our rehearsals"

THE REV. HENRY IRONMONGER had a reputation in Halifax as a successful teacher of elocution and I had heard his marathon recitations of Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* long before that winter evening when I became one of his pupils.

A diminutive, dapper Congregationalist minister, he ran classes in his home. About a dozen young people made up my class and we were set to recite such poems as "Not Understood," "The Highwayman" and "The *Revenge*."

The other pupils all came from families a little better placed on the economic ladder than my own and I was so impressed by the amount of clothes they seemed to have that I decided to go to class one night in a suit discarded by my brother Arthur because of a rip in the trousers seat.

My Prestige In Danger

As all the family were out I changed into it without having it repaired. By holding my legs tightly together and remaining seated the gap was not visible, so off I went, determined to let them all see I had other clothes.

Hardly had the lesson started than the fantastic fear gripped me that Mr. Ironmonger was going to ask me at any moment to do breathing exercises, which would mean standing at the front of the class. I heard his command: "Come forward, Wilfred! Show them how to breathe! Now—bend over and take your breath!"

The seconds, the minutes ticked away. How dreadful to have to go out and bend over to show a portion of protruding shirt!

I heard nothing, learned nothing in that lesson. It was agony, for I knew one move would destroy in a flash whatever prestige I had. It was the last time I wore that suit.

Although I just could not accept some of my master's teaching, much of it was of enormous value and his influence was the main key to my successes at the long-established Mrs. Sunderland Musical Festival in Huddersfield, the Leeds Musical Festival and another at Liverpool. All my prizes were won for elocution, and news of my achievement flared through the village so that it was no surprise when I was asked to appear at their Sunday School concert.

The Hall Seemed Vast

My mother was delighted and bought me a new tie and soft white collar for the occasion. Everybody was there. The hall seemed vast, and my cheeks burned with excitement.

Strangely, when I returned a few years ago that same hall looked terribly tiny and I should think it could hold no more than 150 people. Even then they would be too packed to be comfortable.

Further public appearances followed quickly, and I was invariably called upon to recite at our fairly regular family parties. Things were looking up for all of us; the business was progressing steadily if unspectacularly and the material signs of our rise in the world were the delivery of a piano and the appearance of new curtains and a carpet.

Meanwhile, I was still attending classes regularly and the only things I failed to absorb from Mr. Ironmonger's teaching were those I rejected as wrong.

He not only taught us elocution: he produced plays with us at the Y.M.C.A. Very soon I was playing leading parts.

One of my passing interests in these days was the Boy Scouts. They offered an outlet for my exhibitionism and I revelled in the parades, processions and public displays, for I knew people were watching and I believed they were watching me in particular.

When it came to the question of studying for badges I made it clear to all, by an absolute lack of interest, that it was not in my line—although I made an exception for the Entertainer's Badge, which I won easily after giving the examiner a forceful example of how I would entertain at a scouts' concert.

My brother Arthur had an armful of badges, but my uniform was bare: yet I was always anxious to be right in the forefront during the occasions of pageantry when my mother would always stand at the same street corner to see us go by. She used to smile the sort of smile that suggested she knew me only too well and realized I was beyond recall!

When I was eighteen I joined an amateur dramatic society. It was a very young group I linked up with; the King Cross Amateur Dramatic Society, which had yet to give its first production.

We finally settled on a play far above the level of our competence, *Julius Caesar*, in which I was to be Brutus. I learned the whole part in two days, an achievement of which even the thought upsets me now.

Three members of that inexperienced group eventually became professional actors.

We Ranted And Roared

Our *Julius Caesar* was given for Sunday School funds. We strutted in our Roman togas and ranted and roared our lines. After this pounding of *Caesar* the Vicar climbed to the stage and said he had enjoyed it; the audience certainly had, for they clapped and cheered and reacted in the right places.

They were nearly all relations of the cast; not a Pickles was missing.

Another young, embryo actor started his stage career in Halifax at the same time. He was a handsome lad with an unusual personality.

I knew him well because he had been to school at Rishworth with my brother Arthur; our mutual interest in the theatre brought us together, and I used to slip into his father's shop where we would talk about acting and plays and actors and playwrights for hours on end. We would be discussing the possibilities of *Hamlet* or *Twelfth Night* when a customer would enter.

My friend would contort his face into an expression of frustration and rebellion, continue the discussion for a moment or two longer and then break off to serve a tie or shirt. He hated it all just as I hated building. Such was the early single-mindedness of Eric Portman.

My love for the stage and the spoken word met with a rather chilly reception in the family. When somebody told my father I was good at recitations, he said: "Eh, ay, talk t'our Wilfred about drainpipes and he'll answer thi with a line of poetry!"

I soon got my first glimpse behind the scenes of a real theatre. A young and brilliant actor called Henry Baynton brought his company to Halifax to give Shakespeare's plays.

For *Julius Caesar* he brought in local amateurs to play the crowd; and I saw

Pickles and his wife, Mabel, re-visit the Rev. Henry Ironmonger, whose elocution teaching "was of enormous value"

to it that I was one of the amateurs selected. To make the evening memorable, Baynton patted me on the head as he walked through the "crowd" as Brutus. I walked on air for days.

Eric Portman also fell under Baynton's spell, and to such an extent that he resolved to take the plunge. So when Henry Baynton's company moved on to conquer other towns, Eric went with him.

When the company returned to Halifax some months later the young Portman was taking important parts and his name was included on the posters advertising the show. My brother and I decided to telephone him and ask him to have tea with us and talk over old times.

We arranged a meeting in the town. As Arthur and I waited for him, we talked about Eric and his acting and exchanged theories about what improvement he may have made under Baynton.

I noticed a figure coming towards us wearing a wide-brimmed Homburg hat pulled well down over the forehead, and a heavy, gorilla-shouldered overcoat. As the man drew close I joked loudly to Arthur: "Here he is!"

We both laughed. But it was indeed Eric!

He was now the complete actor and, just as I had once walked down the queue in the half-light hoping they would take me for an actor, Eric, I thought, was now carrying off a development of that form of exhibitionism, pretending to himself he was a stranger playing in a strange land. He even asked us the way to St. James's Road, one of the main streets of Halifax. But Eric, whose voice then was just as it is known now to millions of moviegoers, was a very fine actor. I find him consistently amusing and grand company.

To me, Eric was the man with the torch. He had started out and in doing so had shown me the way.

I persevered with my acting and spent night after night learning lines, rehearsing scenes from plays that ranged from Shakespeare to the light efforts of minor playwrights of the day; and even as I tramped slowly homewards through the silent streets past the windows of scores of little houses, I was thinking of stage techniques and of great rôles I was bursting to play.

Change In Family Plans

One night, returning home from a rehearsal, I noticed that both my mother and father had something important to say, but I was not prepared for what they told me.

My father had been offered a job as manager of a building firm in Southport and had decided to take it. Arthur, now married, was to take over the house and I would go to my Aunt Sarana's family at King Cross.

The King Cross Amateur Dramatic Society, like about a dozen more societies, was struggling along in a small way: we were all keen and would willingly have sacrificed the whole of our spare time in making ready for a show, but we hadn't the resources to make a great deal of headway.

Then the moment produced the man. For there strode into the picture an imaginative, eager young parson called the Reverend Leonard J. Hines, who got in touch with a number of spirited, but small, dramatic societies in the town, and suggested they should amalgamate to form a group that could put on really impressive productions of the highest class.

His idea caught on. There was an immediate response and the Halifax Thespians were born. Soon they were talked about.

And when our first play was announced, the Halifax Thespians became a household name in many parts of the town. We put on *Dear Brutus* for one matinée at the Theatre Royal and I had the part of Purdie.

During the day I was still working in the building trade, first with my Uncle Isaac and afterwards with another firm; as soon as work was over, I grabbed my dusty jacket and made for home and a quick bite before setting out for rehearsals. I stayed up too late every night and when my head sank finally into the pillow, there was an unending buzz of lines.

Words, words, words! So it went on. Building and acting, day and night! Nobody interfered because they all knew I had a mind of my own.

But the crack-up was inevitable. I developed a headache, a cold; I shivered and felt dizzy.

Somebody obviously sent a colourful account of the whole affair to my parents, for within two or three days, when I was feeling rather better, a letter came from my mother in which she ended: "You must come to Southport for a bit. The rest will do you good. It's a nice place and we know you'll like it."

I Packed My Bags

So I gave up my job, postponed my development as an actor, packed my bags, and steamed out of the soot-grimed Halifax station on a rainy morning in March, 1929. Somehow, I was pleased to be on my way and yet sorry that so much of my life was being cut off from me. A change, perhaps only for a while, I thought.

I pondered on the profit and loss account of my departure from Halifax; as for Southport, I don't recall that I even gave it a thought. It was a "posh place" at the other end of the line.

But my arrival in this Paris of the North of England was to herald terrific changes in my life. . . .

I was still not robust and the quietness and the fresh sea breezes were a tonic. I soon began to feel better and to take more notice of what was going on around me. One day I had the good fortune to meet Arthur Belt, a massive man and at one time producer with the Manchester Repertory Company.

He told me he was producing a play at the local church and added: "But we're a raw bunch!"

It was a Lancashire play called *The Jeffersons* and Belt soon made it plain that he was disappointed with the young fellow who was to play the juvenile lead. He suggested that as soon as I felt well enough I should go down to the hall and show him what I was worth.

"I think you would be a better juvenile lead," he said. "Anyway, we'll see."

In those congenial suroundings it was natural that my health improved. Within ten days I was down at the church hall watching one of the rehearsals of *The Jeffersons*.

Belt introduced me to the cast during the break, told me all his troubles and shuddered. "To think this is due for public production next week!" he exclaimed despairingly.

Girl With Auburn Hair

I immediately forgot the names of everyone he had introduced and was less than half-attentive to the worried Belt; for my eyes were fixed on a girl with glistening auburn hair. Only when she disappeared was my mind back with Belt and it was to hear him saying: "Go on! Try reading in the juvenile part."

I joined the rest of the company in the room and went through my lines quite easily. Belt, I could see, was overjoyed. I was dying to act with this group but I also thought it would be unsportsmanlike to displace this lad who had been rehearsing the part for several weeks.

I knew how I would have felt in his position.

As soon as I was able to corner Belt on his own, I went over to him and told him of my decision. He was rather disgruntled but the rest of the cast, to whom the news soon spread, were evidently relieved and delighted, for I saw them all chattering happily together—and in their midst was the girl with the auburn hair.

I had heard Belt address her as "Mabel," but for the life of me I couldn't

Continued on page 18

The best years

by

OSCAR SCHISGALL

ILLUSTRATED BY CRITCHLOW

Somehow he'd never had time to get to know his son. Now the boy was leaving. Was it too late?

The words became blurred but Colman couldn't lift his face. Just then, he didn't want Andy to look at him

A FEW MOMENTS BEFORE he felt the pang, Henry Colman was in fine humour. He was in his bedroom, and he had just got into a dressing-gown, and now he lit a pipe. When you reached your middle forties, a quiet evening at home could be wonderful, especially after a day of wrangling in court with other lawyers.

Not that he'd be idle tonight; downstairs a briefcase full of papers waited to be read. But that was all right. It would be a joy to work in the peace of his living-room.

Colman walked towards the stairs, a stocky figure with a touch of grey in his hair.

This afternoon Geoffrey Harrison, his partner, had said: "Henry, I don't see how you do it. What a dynamo of a man you are! Don't you *ever* ease off? Don't you ever take time off for other things?" Colman had smiled, as he was smiling now. He rather liked to be recognized as an indefatigable worker.

After all, it was the kind of reputation that helped a man. And though he had achieved a great deal—a fine home, a good car, membership of an exclusive golf club—Colman felt he could go much further. He had no fear of work, as long as it helped his career.

At the door of his son's room he paused.

Andy sat at his typewriter, not writing a word. He was seventeen and dark-haired—a slim, good-looking boy with the fine body of an athlete. Colman was proud of his son; he'd heard some heart-warming reports of Andy's popularity at the expensive co-educational day school which, he and his wife had felt, would help Andy to develop in closeness to them.

Now Andy looked so troubled that Colman asked: "What's bothering you, son?"

Andy fidgeted. "It's this essay. It's rather tough. We've got to write about the best years of our lives—which are they, and why? The boys have to write on their best years with father, the girls on their best years with mother . . . sort of feeble."

Colman chuckled. "Nobody's ever decided which *are* the best years," he said, "so you'll be pretty safe any way you put it."

There was nothing new in Andy's sweating over an essay. Give him a complicated problem in maths, and he solved it in a jiffy. Put him on a tennis court, and he knew exactly what he was doing every second. But when it came to essays, he was always in trouble.

But Colman wasn't worried; he knew a boy couldn't shine in every field. He said: "Good luck with it," and went down the stairs. In a vague way he wondered what *were* the best years for a father and son. He'd never thought about it much. There was nothing wrong about the years he'd had with Andy until now—except that he'd been too busy with his own work to have much time for Andy.

And then, halfway down the steps, Colman felt the pang. It hit hard. It stopped him.

He realized for the first time that, good or bad, *his* years with Andy were over! This was the last of them! Another few months. . . .

Colman was stunned. He'd never seen it this way before. Once a boy went off he ceased being part of your home. For the next five years—five full years, since Andy planned to study medicine—he'd be away. Oh, he'd come back now and then on brief holidays; but the centre of his life and interests would be the medical school.

And after those five years? When he got his M.D. Andy would be twenty-two. He'd strike out somewhere for himself. Set up in rooms. Marry. In any case, *this* would no longer be his home. . . .

Henry Colman felt shaken as he continued down the stairs and into the living-room. His wife was putting a log on the fire and when she turned and saw him a worried look came into her face. "Is something——" she began, and Henry managed a weak smile.

"It's nothing," he said. "Just—just something about a case I hadn't thought of before."

She kissed him lightly, and he heard her going upstairs as he sank into a chair before the fire.

Upstairs he could hear the first hesitant clicks of Andy's typewriter. As he looked into the fireplace, forgetting the papers that had to be read, the feeling of loss became heavier.

He thought, *Seventeen short years, and then it's over.* It was a hard thing

to grasp. It struck him that he had never really been close to Andy; he had never really *known* the boy—which was an odd way for a father to feel. Oh, he'd done many of the things other fathers did with their sons: an occasional cricket match, trips abroad in summer.

But somehow he had never been able to fuse his life with Andy's. That was, he could see, because he'd always been so busy with his own ambitions. When a man was ambitious in a profession like law, it was a twenty-four-hour-a-day job. You had to join all sorts of organizations, meet people, throw yourself into municipal affairs, make speeches. Colman's partner said jokingly that he lived all his life like a political candidate trying to win an election. Well, maybe. But it had paid. . . .

Only—he saw now, with this terrible sense of shock, that it had kept him away from his son. There had never been enough time for Andy. He had let opportunity slip by. *The best years were gone. . . .*

Almost an hour passed, while the typewriter clattered haltingly upstairs. He didn't even open the briefcase. He sat still, miserable, blaming himself for having turned his back on something that could have been rich and gratifying. Upstairs the typewriting ended. And suddenly Colman wanted to be with Andy, talk to him.

Of one thing he was certain: in these next few months he wasn't going to work the way he had been working. He'd devote every moment he could to Andy. Perhaps a few brief weeks of closeness could still be salvaged. He had to try.

Colman went upstairs. He found Andy getting into pyjamas, and he hesitated, hardly knowing how to begin. Finally, in desperation, he asked: "How—how did the essay turn out?".

Andy wrinkled his nose. "Oh, I can't write, Dad."

"Let's have a look."

Andy handed him the paper with some embarrassment. "It's so forced," he said.

As Colman read, half his mind still groped for some way of bridging the chasm between himself and Andy. He caught scattered phrases. "When a boy is very young . . . interested in the things that belong to boyhood. . . . But his father . . . interested in making a living . . . hard for them to get together. . . ."

Suddenly his mind came into focus. He blinked, then read on in surprise: "I think the best years with my father will come when I have finished my training. Then we will live in the same adult world and have the same kind of interests. We will be able to enjoy things together—golf, fishing, clubs, politics—all the things men like to do with their close friends. So I am looking forward to the years *ahead*. I am positive they will turn out to be the best years I will ever have with my father."

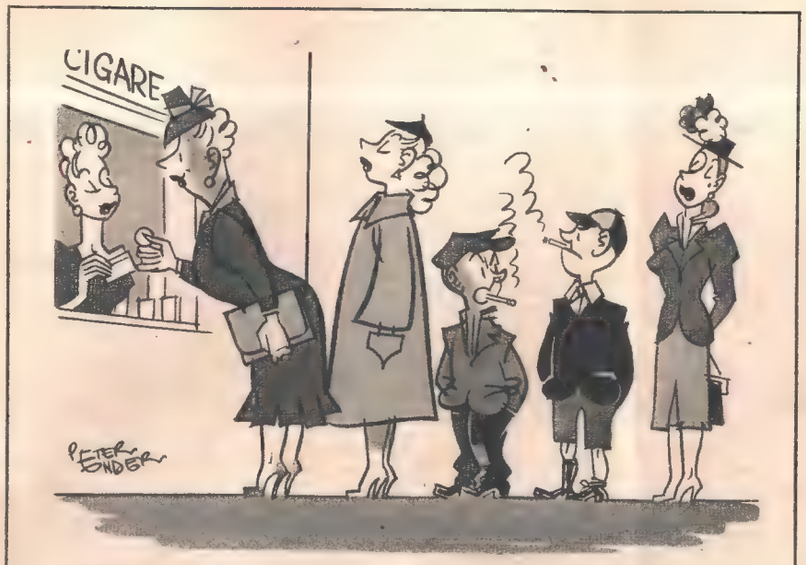
Colman stared at the paper. The words became blurred. He couldn't lift his face. He didn't want Andy to see it. He couldn't even talk.

And all the despair in him, the sense of loss and loneliness, began to melt away. He told himself he'd been wrong and Andy was right. The boy had to be right. His way was the only way to feel about the future. Suddenly he was so happy he wanted to cry. He started to put an arm around Andy's shoulders. But he didn't. He dropped the paper on the bed, silent, knowing anything he might say now would sound silly to the boy. Feeble.

"You think it's any good, Dad?"

"Ye—es," Colman said as he turned away. "I—I think it's—very good."

Very good? he thought. *I wouldn't swap these few paragraphs for all of Shakespeare!*



"There'd be plenty for everyone if only the women smoked less"

MY LIFE by WILFRED PICKLES

Continued from page 16

remember her surname. Long after we had all dispersed, I was still urgently searching my memory for the name and it suddenly occurred to me that the most convenient way of finding out was to go down the road and look at one of the poster bills advertising the show.

I walked around scrutinizing the hoardings until I came across the poster I wanted. I struck three matches. "Mabel . . . Mabel . . . Mabel. . . ." I was thinking.

Then I saw it. "Mabel Myerscough."

The next move was to learn where she lived. This, I decided, could best be done by approaching Belt as casually as possible and asking him for the Myerscough's address.

Belt was quite agreeable if a little puzzled, and the following morning—it was a Sunday—I strolled past the Myerscough's house in the hope of seeing this girl Mabel. I went up and down several times like a policeman on his beat, sometimes pretending to be quite purposeful and in a hurry to get somewhere, although in fact I merely went to the corner of the road before doubling back.

I Was Asked In

To many a householder my passing to and fro must have seemed suspicious; and I had not gone unnoticed in the Myerscoughs' home, for John, Mabel's youngest brother, had spotted me and was saying: "There's that fellow who came down for the rehearsal the other night. I wonder why he's pacing about outside?"

John, who was about my build, then went to the door and called: "Are you looking for me?" Although in a vague way I had wanted to be hailed by the Myerscoughs I was shocked and taken aback now that it had happened.

I swallowed my pride, disguised my nervousness, and lied. "Yes," I replied.

"Come in then," said John, in a friendly, matter-of-fact way.

Shown into the front room, I was aware that an immediate explanation was expected, so I told them hopefully, but not very confidently, that I had been wondering if the society would care for me to give a hand with the make-up when the show went on.

That was the signal for an animated exchange about the show and I soon knew that all the family were in on it in some way or other. At this point, in came Mabel, looking even more attractive than on the previous evening.

Families In Contrast

I took to the family right away. I recognized both Mabel's brothers as the men who were looking after the lighting and the stage management at the hall, and her father, looking like a colonel, erect and handsome with his white moustache, I had also seen at the rehearsal.

From this first meeting there grew up a deep friendship which became stronger until Mabel's father died in 1946. He might have been my own father, he was so interested in my welfare and ambitions.

What impressed me was the contrast between Mabel's family and my own. I had been brought up to regard the hours of eight to five as exclusively working hours, just as Monday to Friday was a working period, and there was to be no thought of pleasure until Saturday.

But this did not apply in the Myerscoughs' home. They were accustomed to entertaining and all of them had been connected with the stage, even Mabel's uncles and aunts. Her mother, a handsome, smartly dressed woman with a strong personality, had in her younger days played as a principal girl in pantomime alongside the unforgettable Maggie Duggan.

Their talk pleased me. It had a wide range and was full of the sort of shop-talk I imagined actors indulged in when they got together away from the theatre.

It was an enriching experience for me just to be among these people who talked easily and enthusiastically about all the things that interested me and who had learned so much about drama and the art of entertainment. I knew I could never be bored in this company. I spent more and still more time with them and they brought me into the conversation and made me feel a part of their circle.

My Courting Days

Although our families had such different backgrounds and approaches to life, Mabel and I were delighted to find that they got on so well together. As my friendship with Mabel developed, she became convinced of my acting ability and never gave up encouraging me to stick to my ambitions.

Hardly an evening passed that did not find us walking out together, and we went to see every play within reach. We went regularly to the Opera House in Southport and booked every Saturday night at the Liverpool Playhouse.

I looked forward to our Saturday evenings in Liverpool and if anybody had asked me at this time, "Are yer coortin'?" I would have answered with a very definite "Yes." Indeed, within four months of our first meeting, Mabel and I were engaged.

We both knew that, although we shared many common interests, our personalities were completely different. But, more important, we had seen how complementary were those personalities.

Mabel was practical, her feet were firmly planted on the ground and she looked much farther ahead than I did.

"You're a dreamer, an idealist. I'll have to look after you," Mabel once said.

It was during our engagement that her practical vision more or less set me on the road to a career I had not planned. One weekend, after we had seen a particularly moving show in Liverpool, I told Mabel I would like to join the Liverpool Repertory Company.

She turned to me and said: "I wouldn't dash into it. I think you would be better on the radio. There's a real opportunity there and until you've seen what the chances are of getting into it, I should forget about the 'Rep.'"

Mabel Sees Ahead

Mabel said she was in no way questioning my abilities as a stage actor, but she was convinced I had a technique that was peculiarly suited to broadcasting.

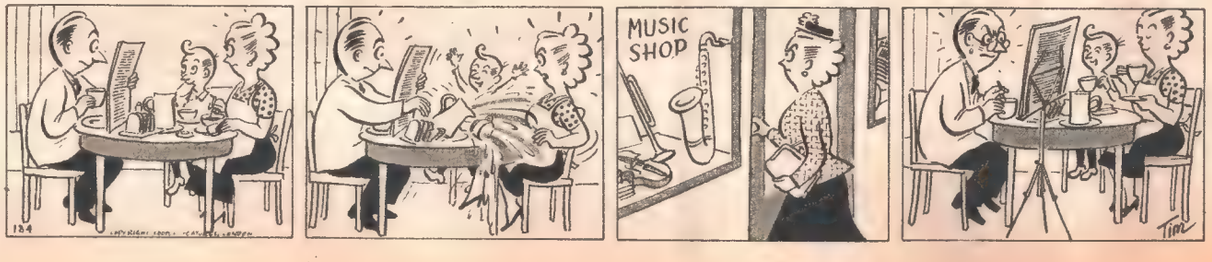
"You can play two or three parts in one play—like the other night when you read both the old man's and young woman's parts—and that sort of thing can be done so well on the air. Don't you think it's worth trying?"

It was all very novel to me but I had to admit that there was something in what she had said. From that moment I have never regretted taking her advice. She has a gift for seeing things on her horizon before they have reached the level of my feet.

NEXT WEEK: I marry—and ask for a B.B.C. audition

OH, JOHNNY!

by TIM



They barter for their brides

by DENNIS HOLMAN

Among Irish farming folk it takes three to make a marriage—two fathers and a matchmaker. And romance can wait until they fix the price of the bride in pigs and pounds

Nine men in a pub settled Mary Lacey's marriage forty years ago. She was matched to a farmer: dowry £300

MARKET DAY IN AN Irish market town is the day for deals. In the main street—a confusion of jaunting-cars and stalls crammed with boots and old clothes, with livestock herding round—farmers haggle over the cost of pigs, cows and frightened sheep. But in the pubs, occasionally in the small inner room beyond a blackened door, they employ an identical technique—this time over the price of a wife.

Thus in a pub in Oldcastle, Co. Cavan, when somebody thumped on the door of the inner room from the other side, and the barmaid started filling a series of pint glasses, one farmer turned to another. "It's a match for old Lacey," he explained. "Sure, it's only Matchmaker Christy Black could do it."

Nine men were sitting at the table in a fug of smoke as the barmaid went in with the porter, four on one side of the table, four opposite, with Christy Black, the most famous matchmaker of the district, at the head. Voices were thick, for this economic conference had lasted four hours.

"Three hundred and fifty and not a penny less," the spokesman on one side of the table was saying. "It's a good farm she's getting, and the running of it without interference, and a good, steady man is Lacey."

"Two fifty." The opposite spokesman was adamant. "Mary is a fine, rosy-cheeked girl, and a better baker you wouldn't find in all Ireland."

"Dammit for a story," Christy Black interrupted. "Why not split the difference and make it three hundred?"

The Deal Was On

The first spokesman took a swig at his glass, scratched his head, and offered: "Well, if she's all ye say she is, Lacey'll settle for three hundred."

"But we'll first walk the land," the other said. "If it's to our liking, Mary can have him, and may God bless the two of them."

That happened forty years ago. There have been few changes in the Oldcastle pub—the blackened door may look a little older, but in the room beyond is the same table in the same position, the spittoon under it and the benches against the walls.

"That was a great skite," Christy Black told me when we re-visited the spot. He shut one eye, remembering Lacey's wedding. "Eating, drinking and dancing all day and night we were to the crack of dawn." And that is all an Irish matchmaker usually gets for his services—a skite, a prominent part in the proceedings, a lot of friends, and, Black adds, "a number of enemies as well."

Lacey is dead and gone. Mary is a white-haired little old woman living on at the stone farmhouse, with its thatched roof, a stack of turf in the yard, three sows, five cows, and a brigade of hens that swarm around her whenever she goes into the yard calling "Chuck, chuck, chuck!" scattering handfuls of grain.

There is one daughter, now a Mrs. Lynch, with her three children and a husband, who runs the farm, the property having been signed over to the younger generation. Mary still works there, but much of her time goes in watching and praying for her grandchildren as they grow like tough young plants above the ground.

Mention Christy Black as the architect of it all and the old woman replies: "God help us, why do you come to me? There must be a hundred other matches the old scoundrel made!"

A matchmaker is generally a shopkeeper, publican or local character, who is pretty well known and himself versed in his neighbours' affairs. He acquires the title after years of extrovert activity; but for a man like Christy Black fame as a matchmaker was inevitable.

Fifty years ago Black was an auctioneer, selling land, property, crops, setting land for grazing. His profession took him far afield into contact with a good many people as well as their private circumstances.

Though he now sits on West Meath's County Council, and has long since given up auctioneering for the life of a farmer, he can still say pretty accurately what most of his acquaintances are worth. Black is ideally qualified for matchmaking.

Proper Thing To Do

Matchmaking is, in the Irish countryside, the usual, in fact until recently, the only respectable method of marriage and generally, too, of inheritance. It is a contractual marriage made by the parents or families of the marrying parties and involving a disposal of properties.

The choice of an heir from among his sons rests with a farmer. Few families can afford more than one or two matches. One son is "settled on the land." He gets the farm, and a wife. As for the others, a Cork parish priest said of them: "Unless a match is made, it means either emigration or celibacy."

There is a steady decline in the population of Ireland, numbers having fallen from 6,548,000 in 1841 to 2,963,000 in 1926, when it was estimated that over thirty per cent of the native-born Irish had emigrated and were living in other countries. And Ireland has a larger proportion of unmarried persons of all ages than any other country for which records are kept. For this, many people blame the custom of matchmaking.

When the time comes to pass on the farm, often when the "nipper" is in his fifties, the farmer begins casting around for a "good, strong, rosy-cheeked girl."

Matches Skill With Beauty

Black says that the job of finding one is, in his experience, sensitive work, for he always tries to match couples with a feeling for blood, breeding points such as strength and skill with health and beauty, and always, of course, with a nice understanding of dowries in pounds and farms in acres.

Sooner or later Black sets out to see a farmer about his daughter, and, if he finds there is basis for negotiation, fixes a time and place for the fathers to meet: either in the girl's home, where the young man and his father arrive with a bottle of whiskey, the young man throws his cap inside the door, and, if it is not thrown out again, they go in; or at a pub. Women are never permitted to "sit on a match" as their presence is said to bring bad luck.

The proceedings are formal. The first drink is called by the young man,

Christy Black has matched many an Irish couple but says "no girl has been fast enough to catch me yet"

the second by the young woman's father, who will ask the matchmaker what "fortune" or dowry is expected and for it what his daughter may expect in return — how many cows, sheep, pigs, horses?

What are the makings of a garden? Is there plenty of water, a pump in the yard? Is it far from the road or on it? What kind of house is it, slate or thatch? How far from the chapel, school and town?

So the haggling begins, until ultimately the deal is struck—a figure representing hours of adjustment of the girl's "fortune" and the boy's farm. Follows a meeting for the young people to come and be introduced, particularly if the match is between families not known to each other, and later "walking the land" when the girl's party comes to inspect the farm, making an inventory of the stock and checking on all the advantages previously claimed for it.

The cows get a feed early that day so as to look good, geese having been killed, the house whitewashed, whiskey and porter brought in. The young man stays outside on the road, but sends the matchmaker in to show the girl's father round, taking care to highlight certain points and play others down.

Farmers have often been known to drive a neighbour's cattle on to their land, to give a prospective father-in-law a better impression, but the best subterfuge story concerns a publican. Wanting a rich farmer's daughter, he boosted the prosperity of his pub, so the farmer agreed to "walk the land" before starting negotiations.

On the morning of the appointed day the publican called in his patrons, gave them each 2s. 6d. and told them to spend it on porter. Business, the father saw, was brisk indeed, and on the strength of it let his daughter go with a dowry of £700.

Putting It In Writing

If assent is finally given to the marriage, everybody goes into the house and there is a party until dawn the next day, when both fathers go to a solicitor in town to have the "writings" drawn up, and the young couple follow to have a ring fitted and to walk up the main street together and be admired by all.

The "writings" is a legal instrument conveying the ownership of the farm to the son, usually combining a marriage settlement and a will. Definite provision is made by the father for the maintenance of himself and his wife, generally to include the use of a room in the house, a place at the hearth, the right to the "grass of a cow," their food, and maybe the yield of a patch of potatoes.

Where there is no male heir to the farm, the incoming son-in-law (*cliamhan isteach*) brings a dowry, generally much larger than that expected of a bride, and the dowry in each case is paid to the father in return for handing over the farm, lock, stock and barrel.

But few fathers ever enjoy the money. Almost invariably there are other children to be provided for—girls who need dowries, sons who demand at least the fare to America.

Often a good dowry brought in by a girl goes towards marrying off her husband's sister, and then, in turn, it is passed on to enhance the prospects of yet another sister-in-law. On and on these dowries go.

A record is reported in Tipperary where £400 remained intact as a dowry for seven successive brides, stopping eventually with an old widower. With no daughters to take it from him the old man drank the "fortune" away and himself to death.

Married Wrong Bride

It is often hard to get a plain girl married, and one from Gurteen, Co. Tipperary, would be a spinster still if it hadn't been for the enterprise of her brothers.

It happened that a match was made for a farmer called Michael O'Donnell with one of a family of five girls. £500 was offered. Michael was shown the girl who was to accompany it, and the deal was clinched.

On the morning of the wedding, as he and his cousin Willy stood waiting at the altar, the bride entered the church and started walking up the aisle.

"Michael," said his cousin frowning, "they've brought the plain sister. 'Tis not the girl we bargained for!"

Michael looked and turned to his cousin. "Irra what harm?" he said. "The dowry's the same and the face could be worse!" and married the girl. And in Templemore, the people say, she couldn't have been a better wife.

In Tipperary town there's a drapery store that does quite a good business dressing the bride for country weddings. Says Norah O'Brien, the storekeeper's daughter: "A bride comes in about a week before the wedding with about £20 'luck money,' and buys four things—a royal-blue dress, a coat, a pair of shoes and a hat with flowers. The groom will follow the next day and he'll buy a navy-blue suit, a white shirt, a striped tie and brown shoes."

New shoes give honeymooners away when they arrive at one of the small Dublin hotels for the weekend, and many Irish country jokes are built up round the embarrassment of the first night.

"I've heard talk of romance being wonderful," one woman is reported to have said in this regard. "But God help us, what's natural can't be wonderful!"

The couple returns to yet another dance at the farm, the "Hauling home," but next day, the celebrations ended at last, they settle down to the more serious business of working and raising a family.

Though Irish marriages are fertile by comparison with other countries, they tend to become fewer and fewer, and the delay into middle age grows longer and longer.

Ten-year Courtship

A priest tells the story of a couple who had been courting quite some time. One day the woman said: "John, we've been courting now ten years."

"That's right," said John.

"Don't you think it's time we were thinking of getting married?"

"Wisha, Mary girl," John replied. "Who'd have us?"

John and Mary were inhibited by the old ideas. A match could be made for them, if there was money and land to bargain with, but there was nothing they could do about it for themselves.

And the priest remembers marrying the postman of a little seaside village who had waited till he retired at seventy before taking a wife—they had been courting twenty-three years. "She's no chicken," neighbours said of the bride, but how many Irish brides are chickens?

In 1938 over half of all women who married in Ireland (and only a negligible number were not making first marriages) were between the ages of thirty-five and forty-five.

Occasionally one hears of a match being made in which the boy and girl don't set eyes on each other until the day of the wedding. "But," says Christy Black, "I've never made such a match."

In truth matchmaking is far from being a business of "loveless marriages." Matchmaking is convention. For those who are brought up to it the whole affair seems to provide just as much a thrill as "falling in love" in communities where courtship is more a matter of personal initiative.

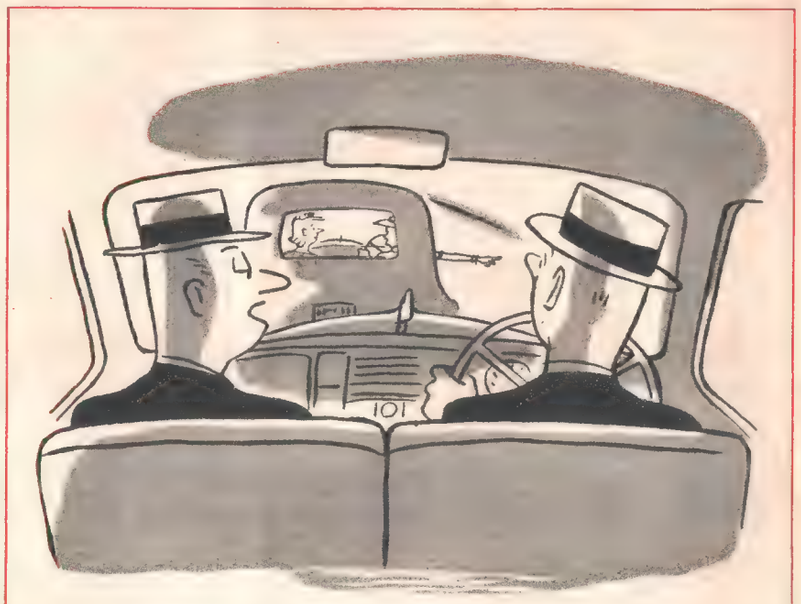
No Escaping The Match

A match does not imply merely one kind of courtship. Many couples who make their own decisions, as they are increasingly doing today, have a match made for them. Even in the case of "runaways," as elopements are called, the boy and girl are often brought back and a match is made.

A number of Irishmen I met say they don't see as many of the old matchmakers about as there used to be. "Sure, and what do they expect?" Christy Black answers. "You can read their advertisements in the matrimonial columns of the daily newspapers, with the 'For Sale' and 'Apartments to Let.'"

Matchmaker Christy Black is himself now seventy; and still a bachelor.

"They've been trying to make a match for me these last thirty years," he says. "But I tell ye, there was no girl born fast enough to catch me yet!" There is a roguish glint in his eye as he prods you in the ribs.



"Probably pointing out to her friend where she had her last accident"

Four years have been spent on the German war crimes trials, thousands of miles covered in search of evidence. Now, with the last major case drawing to an end, people are asking . . .

Have the war trials been worth while?

by RONALD W. CLARK

AS ARGUMENTS FOR and against the life of von Manstein—the last major war criminal to be tried by the British—shuttled across the courtroom in Hamburg's Curiohaus, I kept thinking back to that unique autumn of Germany, 1945, when I saw it all begin.

Into a curiously ugly mock-Gothic building, once a gymnasium and now a courthouse, in the small town of Luneburg, a few miles from the heath where Field Marshal Montgomery had received the surrender that spring, there shambled forty-four men and women, clad in grey prison clothes and blinking like rather frightened owls in the hard blaze of arc-lights.

Watched by vigilant, red-capped Military Police, they shuffled into two rows in an unpainted wooden dock, stood as five immaculate British officers and a gaunt man in black robes filed into place opposite them beneath a Union Jack, then sat awkwardly on the wooden benches.

The silence, broken by an occasional cough from the spectators at the end of the building, was struck across by the sharp voice of an officer reading a formal order convening the Court. Thus the first trial of war criminals for Hitler's war was started.

Questions And Criticisms

Since then I have watched dozens of similar trials. Over the four years I have heard, and read, criticisms of all kinds. Should the trials have been held at all? What effect have they had on the people of Germany? Have they damaged British prestige in foreign lands? What, in the long run, have we accomplished? Has it all, indeed, been worth while—*or not?*

The answers to these questions cannot be found without some deep soul-searching and careful examination not only of recorded facts but also of the inevitable changes that come with the passing of time.

The most obvious change has been in the public attitude towards the trials since they began four years ago. Superficially, the reasons for this are simple enough. For example, all except the confirmed Communists now reluctantly admit that our allies, the Russians, carried out "atrocities"—although, in all fairness, there is little evidence that these were comparable with those of the Germans.

It has also been brought out, by the interplay of defence and prosecution, how difficult it is to pin down moral responsibility on any one person in some of the more horrible cases. And (with a rather tired shrug) wasn't it all a long time ago?

Fundamentally, however, the matter goes far deeper. It is closely linked with the semi-legal, semi-moral basis on which the trials were begun. But before considering this, let us look at what the trials have accomplished.

Field Marshal von Manstein in the Hamburg court. Many believe it wrong to try him for atrocities allegedly committed eight years ago

At first glance, the figures are reassuring. In the British Zone of Germany alone, 937 war criminals have been tried in 254 separate cases: 260 have been acquitted, 440 sent to prison and 230 sentenced to death. In all, some 3,000 have been tried by the Western Powers.

Nine In Ten Escaped Trial

Yet, against this, it is estimated that only about a tenth of known war criminals have been tried. There have been some curious decisions, notably that which commuted to four years the life sentence passed on Ilse Koch, the notorious "human lampshade woman" of Buchenwald.

And, perhaps most curious of all, not a single one of the eight most prominent German generals and field marshals sentenced to death by British military courts has, in fact, been executed.

Countries east of the Iron Curtain have hanged or shot more than twenty-five. Those sentenced by British courts for the murder of British Commandos, parachutists and prisoners—men such as von Falkenhorst, Kesselring, Maeltzer, Meyer—have had their death sentences commuted to life imprisonment.

Yet it would be an unusual man-in-the-pub who claimed today that the generals should have been executed. We have, in fact, come full circle from the time when it seemed natural to try them for common murder.

The Allies decided to set up war crimes courts because it was known that many hundreds of acts had been carried out which were legally and/or morally wrong.

I say "and/or" because there was often a surprising difference between them. It was clear, for instance, that the men who murdered the R.A.F. prisoners who escaped from Stalag-luft III were indictable under International Law. But the legal position was not nearly so clear in the case, for instance, of some of the concentration camp guards.

I stress the two different points of legality and morality because both have played their part in changing the attitude of the British public to war crimes trials during the last four years. Both points, incidentally, have been raised in the case of von Manstein, his British lawyer maintaining that he should not be tried by a war crimes court because he is still a prisoner of war, and many members of the public feeling that it is not morally sound to try a man for crimes which he is alleged to have committed some eight years ago.

This reluctance to continue the trials has grown more quickly in the case of the generals than in the case of the civilians for one main reason.

The world of the military men, however steeped in harshness and possible crime, has points of contact with our own: they are real people, with families and hopes and little human traits. The world of the men who carefully organized the gassing of 2,000,000 men, women and children is almost incomprehensible unless you have heard one of them explain, as I have done, how really simple it is as long as you work on a round-the-clock basis and get the mass graves the right shape.

Surprise Witness

It was perhaps with the trial of General Student that the first real doubt entered the public's mind.

Student was put on trial in Celle for atrocities alleged to have been carried out when his troops invaded Crete early in the war. It seemed a clear enough case, and I still remember the astonishment which swept through the courtroom when the defence called its first witness.

Into the box strode no less a person than Brigadier L. M. Inglis, commander of the New Zealand Brigade which had fought Student on Crete! Inglis, then a high law official in the Control Commission in Germany, had offered his evidence to the prosecution, who had refused it, and had then approached the defence.

He wanted to see fair play, he said, and to his knowledge Student had fought cleanly. So conclusive did his evidence appear, that Dr. Heine, Student's defending lawyer, decided not to call the other seventeen witnesses he had ready, and immediately closed his case. Student was, in fact, sentenced to five years' imprisonment but this sentence was quashed by the higher military authorities and he was set free.

Looked Like Hanging Case

Now curious things like that were happening far more often than one had reason to expect. They upset one's preconceived ideas and doubt began to grow in many minds.

There was also the case of von Falkenhorst, the grey-haired, ramrod-backed film version of a German officer, charged with aiding and abetting the murder of fourteen British Commandos who had landed in Norway where he was Commander-in-Chief. It looked like "a hanging case," both to most of the Allied

Ilse Koch: from life sentence to four years. "A curious decision"

observers and to the Germans. Yet three points were stressed to the court by Justice Stirling, that hawk-nosed Dickensian Judge Advocate-General, who in 1945 and 1946 appeared in the British military court-rooms like a shrivelling and avenging flame.

Falkenhorst, he emphasized to the court, was a man of good character; he was a kindly man; and his attitude towards the Norwegians had been reasonable. All of which was no doubt borne in mind by the higher authorities who commuted his death sentence to one of life imprisonment.

I remember that when the sentence was altered, the old familiar theory came up again—"all the military men stick together." Yet I doubt very much whether the sentences on any of the German generals—or their subordinates for that matter—were influenced at all by any such feelings.

Two Important Words

The alteration of sentences devolved largely from the curious wording of most charges—not "killing," but "concerned in killing"—and the varying opinions of the responsibility of the men involved.

But it was about this time, the winter of 1946, that the question was first raised which has been raised increasingly since. How long were the trials to continue?

One reason for this was the good impression which many of the military men had created during their trials. Men such as Kurt Meyer who, after being sentenced to death by the Canadians, thanked them for their courteous treatment and added: "I have been dealt with like a soldier."

But was it fair even to a prisoner of war, people were beginning to ask, to keep him in prison, without trial, for one year or two years or, it appeared, indefinitely?

Most people who raised such questions unfortunately lacked the slightest idea of what bringing a war criminal to trial really involved.

By no means exceptional was the case of the men who murdered the fifty R.A.F. officers from Stalagluft III after their escape. Before the trial could be started, a special body of investigators had travelled more than 100,000 miles in more than twelve countries, and had questioned more than 20,000 Germans.

In hundreds of cases the vital evidence needed for a conviction was found to have been looted, thrown away as worthless, or shuttled from one international dossier to another until it was finally lost.

While these pieces in a jigsaw covering a continent were being pieced together it was necessary to detain the men suspected of some of the most appalling crimes known to man. They were detained, if not in luxury at least in decency, and many fared better than they would have done in the rough German world outside.

The British public certainly had no grounds to feel ashamed on that score.

Other doubts were raised, however. I remember sitting through the case of Lieutenant Eck, a U-boat commander who was tried with his brother officers for mercilessly machine gunning survivors from the *Peleus*, a merchant ship which they had torpedoed. Eck claimed that he had had to choose between endangering the lives of his crew (whose position might have been revealed by aircraft spotting the wreckage) and destroying both wreckage and survivors.

Eck was hanged, but I have heard more than one British officer say that he would, in the same circumstances, have done the same thing. Far more significant, however, is the fact that such officers, while making this admission, almost invariably added: "Of course, if I'd been found out I'd have been tried, and I suppose you couldn't complain about that."

The rule of law did, in fact, go far deeper down with us, and with most of the Allied armies, than it ever did with the Germans who fought the last war.

Having watched dozens of these trials I feel that if there is any ground for criticism it is a slightly more technical one: that the defence did not always fully understand the procedure of the trials, or their rules of evidence; that their access to documents was not, at times, as free as it might have been; and that the defence was too often able to plead successfully that it had not been allowed sufficient time to prepare its case.

The significant fact, however, was that it invariably did plead successfully. And when German defending counsel appealed to the court for documents or advice they were invariably granted. In fact, I can think of no case where the defence could reasonably complain against the result of such an appeal.

Nightmare Of The Camps

Most war crimes trials dealt, however, with concentration camp cases and if these raised less interest in Britain than the trials of the military men, that was mainly because that nightmare land of the camps could hardly be understood from the safe side of the Channel.

Some 200,000 Allied women dead in Ravensbruck, 2,000,000 gassed at Auschwitz, the bodies which clogged the bulldozers at Belsen—these are things that the mind cannot grapple with and which must remain forever unknown except to those around whom the stench has arisen.

Yet the most frightening thing which the trials revealed was the "ordinariness" of the men and women responsible.

I remember watching Rudolph Hoess sit down in a bare interrogation room and write out, in the meticulous hand of a country clerk, just how you could kill 10,000 a day if you had the proper organization.

There was Kurt Schomberg, a former sergeant-major who grinned and chatted and tried to crack jokes as he remembered the odd hundred tortured here and the odd hundred killed there. Yes, he supposed they'd try him. But it was hardly enough to get concerned about.

Perhaps the only valid criticism of these trials of camp guards was that the sentences were in some cases too light—one year for "kicking, beating and murder," five years for "kicking to death." Again, however, the "concerned in" wording of the charge was largely responsible.

Acquittals, and there were a number of them, were invariably due to mistaken identity having been proved, the most curious case being that of Oscar Schmidt, the man in the wrong trousers. Like thousands of other inmates of Belsen, he was naked when British troops drove in.

During the scramble towards the liberators, he picked up the first pair of trousers he could find. Unluckily, they were those of an S.S. man who had just fled, so Schmidt, in spite of his protests, was rounded up with the rest of the guards. Even so, his acquittal, together with thirteen others, astonished the Germans.

"You've really acquitted some of them?" a typical Westphalian farmer asked me. "But surely the trial business was only window-dressing? Surely they'll all be hanged?"

That one remark is, unfortunately, a pointer to the complete failure of the authorities in impinging the implications of the trials on the German mind. It is doubtful, however, if better could have been done. Although British justice surprised the Germans, it earned little respect.

Dr. Klein, the Belsen gas chamber expert, once complained: "Why didn't you shoot us out of hand when you caught us?" The tragedy is that this would have been not only just what he would have expected but what he would have admired.

No Sense Of Guilt

The trials have singularly failed to impress on the German mind any sense of guilt. I doubt if they have done anything to prevent similar atrocities happening in any future war. And with the close of the Manstein trial many people who ask, "Was it worth it?" will expect "No" for an answer.

Nevertheless, the trials have been worth while for at least three different reasons. They have established that crimes against humanity may be punished by an extra-national court and have provided many legal precedents which will strengthen the rule of law without which no civilization can continue.

They have provided an indictment of German barbarism out of which no future German apologist will succeed in wriggling—though some of them are already trying to wriggle.

And they have done at least a little to redress the awful affront to humanity of which the Nazi system consisted.

If there are to be regrets about them, they must be regrets that so few guilty men were brought to the dock.

NOW YOU KNOW

HOW CAN YOU CUT DOWN on your winter coal bill and get more out of your coal? One way is to remove any burnable cinders before throwing away the ashes; a second is to make use of coal dust by turning it into coal briquettes. To make these take eight parts of coal dust to one part cement, mix with water and stir to a stiff consistency. Take a handful of the mixture in a piece of paper, press it into a tight ball and let it harden.

Preventing loss of heat is another economy. Air leaks in grates, cracked mica in slow-combustion stoves, badly insulated hot water tanks, thick scaling in pipes, all waste heat and should be repaired.

WRITE TO JOHN BULL ABOUT IT: Readers with personal problems can enlist the help of John Bull's team of experts. Inquiries (other than medical) should be sent to the John Bull Free Advice Service, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Please enclose a stamped and addressed envelope for reply.

Cook's Tour

Unthinkable for Ah Ton to lose face by working for a rival. Perhaps a sea trip would bring him luck

by STANLEY HALL

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM LITTLE

CHE FU YUNG WAS FAT, flabby and flashy. His clothes were the latest and loudest East Side fashion; his tie spoke for itself; diamonds flashed on his fingers. These things offended N'gai Ah Ton's good taste just as they contrasted with the slim, dapper neatness of his person. But they had nothing to do with the surge of indignation within him.

Che Fu Yung's gaudy new temple of food had put N'gai Ah Ton's modest little restaurant out of business. Ah Ton bore no ill-will on that score. That was the luck of business, and they were both business men.

But Che Fu Yung had just offered to employ Ah Ton as number one cook in his kitchens. That was an insult. Even to discuss such an offer would involve loss of face.

Che Fu Yung spread pudgy hands across the desk as his visitor sat silent and impassive. "Perhaps I am not generous enough, N'gai Ah? Such genius as yours merits high reward. Five hundred dollars a month, N'gai Ah? There indeed is a princely offer." Fu Yung's manner was ingratiating.

Ah Ton set his unfinished drink on the desk and picked up his hat. "May the repose of serene ages bless your illustrious ancestors, Che Fu," he murmured as he rose. Both being Cantonese they used their own flowery idiom, not always possible in the polyglot medley of New York's Chinatown.

Fu Yung wheezed to his feet and followed Ah Ton to the door. "Wait, N'gai Ah; let not the mists of pride obscure the fortune which beckons. Between us we can make this place famous. With your genius. . . ." Ah Ton heard no more as he bowed himself out and quietly closed the door.

FU YUNG had been clever. The shining reds and yellows and gilt of his new restaurant; the heavy green silk hangings, with rampant dragons breathing fire all over them; the silent, felt-soled service of white-clad waiters—these were just what the sightseeing New Yorker expected to find in his hunt for the authentic atmosphere of Chinatown.

Against all this Ah Ton had been able to offer only exquisite cooking and modest comfort. It wasn't enough. From the day Fu Yung opened, his trade had steadily drifted away. He was down to his last twenty dollars when he finally closed, but for that he only blamed his own lack of enterprise.

But he could never work for anyone else. After his years as a restaurant proprietor he would lose face as an employee. It was a knotty point, but Ah Ton had an idea.

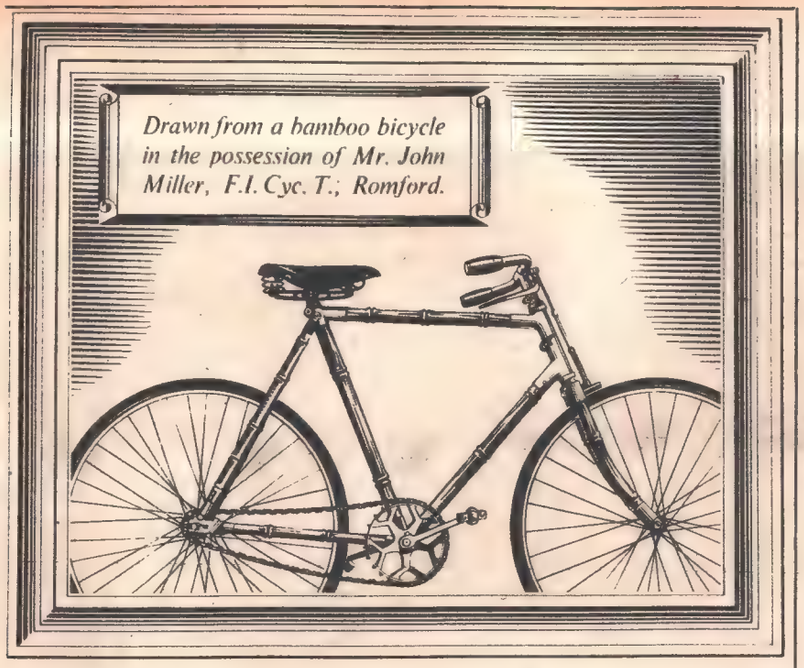
He walked through the noisy, sun-drenched streets of Chinatown and turned in at the open doorway of Szu Ling's boarding-house for seamen. Szu Ling boasted that he could find a job for any man, or the man for any job.

Ah Ton found him in a grubby little office that reeked of opium.

"I want a job, Szu Ling," he said.

Szu Ling regarded him shrewdly out of slitted eyes. A client of Ah Ton's ability represented an engagement fee of

Ah Ton's horrified eyes watched his wallet vanish. Just as swiftly, his hopes of a roulette coup died



Have you ever seen a bamboo bicycle?

Bamboo was used for the frames of a few 'safety' bicycles in the late 1870s because bars of solid steel made the new machine too heavy. The inventiveness of the men in steel soon cured that — with the steel tube, strong *and* light — and the 'safety' became a practical job in 1885.

That sort of development is typical of the history of our steel industry, which indeed may be said to have changed its whole nature with each succeeding generation.

The industry now is 'going the limit' in its 5-year expansion plan, providing plant and equipment to meet the ever-changing demands for steel, for home use and for export.

The steel industry enables us to export over £20-million of British bicycles a year—enough to buy us all our Sunday breakfasts!

STEEL

is serving you well

BRITISH IRON AND STEEL FEDERATION

COOK'S TOUR

Continued from previous page

many dollars. "Sure, sure, N'gai Ah," he said. "I heard you'd had to close your joint. Gee, that's tough. I got a fine job for you; uptown hotel wants a cook for Chinese chow."

Szu Ling was a northerner from Tientsin, a big, swarthy man; his dialect of Chinese would have been a foreign tongue to Ah Ton.

"No good; I want a job as ship's cook."

"A-a-h!" Szu Ling was derisive. "Ship's cook! That's a fine job for the best cook in New York. Send an artist to whitewash a cowshed."

"Suppose I work in hotel I lose face; no can do. Ship job can do; no lose face."

"Oh, all right, all right," Szu Ling grumbled. Ships' cooks didn't command a very high fee. "You got any papers, N'gai Ah? Licence or anything?"

"No got."

"O.K.; I fix it."

Two days later Ah Ton was deposited on board the British tramp steamer *Western Mogul* at Brooklyn pier, complete with seagoing cook's licence. The ship was bound for a round voyage to South America, returning to New York with coffee from Brazil.

He looked without favour at the half-washed serving bench, the dingy paintwork, the carelessly swept floor and the greasy stove. He took the steward's instructions regarding meals, then went to the little berth assigned to him and changed into his working rig.

Curious glances followed him as he returned along the deck past clattering winches and swinging derricks. It was the first time the mates and apprentices of the *Western Mogul* had seen their cook in snowy drill and tall, stiffly starched chef's hat.

At high tea that evening, Captain Grainger looked speculatively at the plate of *chow far main* the steward set before him.

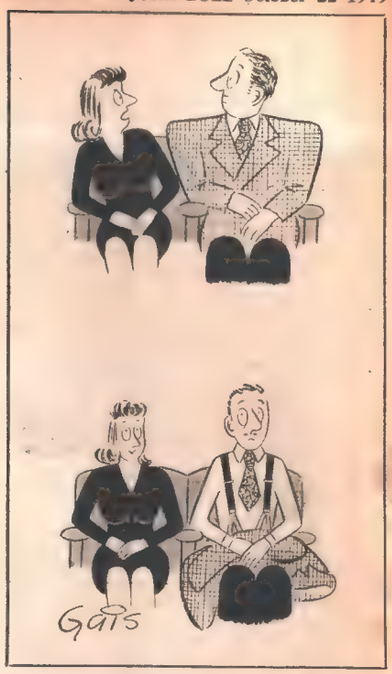
"If it tastes as good as it smells. . . ." he said, and stuck in a tentative fork. After a second sample he looked along at the mate at the other end of the saloon table. "Seems we've got a cook this time, eh?"

The mate looked up, his poised fork charged with noodles fried to a crisp, golden brown. "If this is a fair sample I'm going to enjoy the trip."

By the time the *Western Mogul* left port and began the long run south Ah Ton was regarded by the whole ship's company as a pearl without price. She was a happy and contented ship, largely owing to the remarkable things the cook did with the unpromising materials doled out to him by the steward.

The galley shone and gleamed like an operating theatre. Ah Ton's wants were modest, but they had only to be made known to receive immediate attention. An oven door fitted imperfectly, making it difficult to keep just the degree of heat he required. The second engineer himself had the door off and refitted as neat as a gun barrel within an hour of hearing of it. The galley needed painting out. A word from the steward to the chief officer, and between Ah Ton's quitting his galley in the evening and returning to prepare breakfast in the morning, a squad of deckhands had stripped it down, coated it with quick-drying white enamel intended only for living accommodation, and returned every shining pot and pan to its proper place.

But for all this, Ah Ton wasn't happy. He was a man of the town; the sea wasn't in his blood. He fretted for streets and shops, for the bustle of busy pavements, for the ebb and flow of customers in his restaurant. He delighted in conversation with men of his own



country, but the fo'c'sle hands were Foochow men speaking a harsh, pagan dialect that grated on his ear and was almost unintelligible.

As each succeeding day brought the recurrent monotony of sea and sky, blue or grey according to the mood of the weather, Ah Ton's heart was heavier. At the very longest the trip would occupy three months. In that time he wouldn't earn a quarter of what he needed to open up again in opposition to Che Fu Yung. He could see an endless spell of this unlovely life before him, and Ah Ton grieved.

The ship arrived at Rio de Janeiro and began discharging her cargo. In the evening of the day of arrival Ah Ton went ashore to feast his eyes on brightly lighted streets and shops, to soothe his ears with the roll of traffic and the clatter of tongues. Strolling along the crowded mosaic pavement of the Avenida he was happy again.

But when the *Western Mogul* swung round the Pao de Azucar to head south for Montevideo and Buenos Aires, Ah Ton stood at the poop rail with impassive face but heavy heart, watching the fading skyline of Rio.

The ship stayed only a couple of days at Montevideo, where Ah Ton found little to interest him, then went on to Buenos Aires, the final port of discharge. Here again was the big city throb and pulse that he loved.

He sat in the little cafés and took coffee at its rich and delicious best. He bought lottery tickets in fifth sections like the prudent Argentinos, because the captain kept him short of money. Such thrift chafed the gambling instinct in him, but at all events he had an interest in the prize lists posted up on the hoardings.

For the duration of the ship's stay, Ah Ton was happy. Then the *Western Mogul* was spurning with her screw the ochreous waters of the misnamed River of Silver, bound for Brazil and her cargo of coffee.

Three ports were on the itinerary; Santos, Rio and Port Victoria. The ship was to be just a day or two at Santos to pick up a small consignment before going on to Rio. Ah Ton found the view of Santos from the river uninspiring and decided to stay aboard and keep what money the captain advanced him to spend in company with his friends in Rio.

But a Chinese of the town who came aboard to talk to his countrymen told

Ah Ton of a casino on the far side of the town, where one might play roulette. That was a temptation and a challenge too strong for Ah Ton to resist and that evening saw him in place at one leg of the green-topped, T-shaped table.

With his limited funds he was obliged to play at the lower table, where small stakes were permitted. A single losing bet on the more select table would have cleaned him out. His luck fluctuated; at one moment he was riffling a useful pile of pearl twenty-milreis chips in his fingers; at another only a few fives scattered on the green cloth before him entitled him to remain in place.

He played steadily, impassively, neither plunging nor niggling. He had a useful win; among the chips pushed across to him by the rake were two plaques with "50" stamped heavily on them. He slipped them into his pocket. By the time play came to an end his pocket was comfortingly heavy with fifties. He was several hundred milreis to the good; well over a hundred dollars, he figured it.

He left the casino satisfied; next night he could play at the upper table and go after the big money. A lottery ticket seller was outside the casino, trying to get rid of his few remaining tickets before the draw for the *grande premio* next morning. Ah Ton felt in his pocket for a few milreis for his usual fifth share. Then he remembered the plump wad of notes in his wallet; for once he could afford a complete ticket. He took out a twenty-milreis bill. "*Completo*," he said.

A shadow that wasn't Ah Ton's own followed him back to the river wharves, trailed him round sheds and warehouses and saw him mount the *Western Mogul's* gangway.

The short tropical dusk was deepening swiftly when Ah Ton left the ship next evening to seek in the casino the means of wiping out the slight Che Fu Yung had put upon him. He walked along the planked wharf past deeply shadowed warehouses, his feet crushing cockroaches that the darkness had brought out. He rounded the end of a *frigorifico* that was crammed with frozen meat awaiting the arrival of a Highland liner that would carry it to England. And from the shadows two deeper shadows detached themselves and launched themselves on Ah Ton.

His arms were pinned to his sides; a rough hand ripped his jacket open, thrust into his inner breast pocket and grasped his wallet; a tap behind his knees and a push on his chest dropped him on his back among the scurrying cockroaches. As swiftly and silently as they had come the footpads vanished in the gloom.

Ah Ton got to his feet and straightened his rumpled clothes. This then was the end of his hope of a coup at the roulette table. There was no point in going to the police; what notice would they take of a foreign seaman—a Chinese at that? In any case they would have no chance of tracing a couple of dockside thieves. Ah Ton felt in his trousers pocket; he had still a few milreis in small change. He went out to the street and sat in a little café to take coffee while he considered his position.

A crudely printed bill was tacked up on the wall of the café: "*Loteria Nacional — Grande Premio milreis 500,000 Numero.*" This followed a number heavily printed in red type, and below it a further series of numbers in type of diminishing size indicated the smaller prizewinners. As he sipped his coffee Ah Ton looked idly at the bill; there was something familiar in the sequence of figures of the prizewinning number. He went across to look more closely; the bill bore the current date; it was the draw for that day's lottery.

Without change of expression Ah Ton returned to his table and quietly finished his coffee. When he left, it was with an unhurried, dignified step; and on the way back to the ship his only care was to keep well clear of the shadows of the warehouses. But he locked the door of his narrow little berth before he opened the lacquered wooden box in which were a few mementos of his voyage.

He took out the folded, five-section lottery ticket he had bought the previous evening and compared the number with one he had scribbled down in the café. They were the same. For a few moments he felt quite dizzy, and had to sit down.

He was the winner of half a million milreis and a moderately rich man—when he got the money safely into an American bank.

Ah Ton sat quite still and tried to decide on his wisest course. He could go to Sao Paulo, to the lottery office, and collect his winnings there; but the theft of his wallet had left him with only small change—he hadn't the fare. He could take the ticket to any Brazilian bank and they would collect for him, but that would take two days, and the ship was sailing the next day. Or he could take it to an American bank—there was sure to be one in a big seaport—and have the money credited to him in New York; and that, he decided, was the wisest and safest thing to do. . . .

Reg. Walters swore feelingly the next day when he found himself put to the necessity of preparing lunch for the cabin table. "Skinned out," he reported to the chief officer. "Now I suppose I'll have to stew in this damn' galley all the way back to New York."

But an hour before sailing, a man called Wee Far Lung presented himself with excellent credentials as a cook who had served with the Lloyd Brazileiro Line, and a note from N'gai Ah Ton, apologizing for his absence and offering this number one substitute to take his place, and all pay due to him.

As the *Western Mogul* ploughed her leisurely way to Rio the officer of the watch looked up at an air-liner speeding north overhead. From the plane N'gai Ah Ton looked down at the ship and invoked the blessings of his ancestors on her. Was it not by her agency that the brand new wallet in his pocket was filled with good American dollars, while many, many more dollars were credited to him in a New York bank?

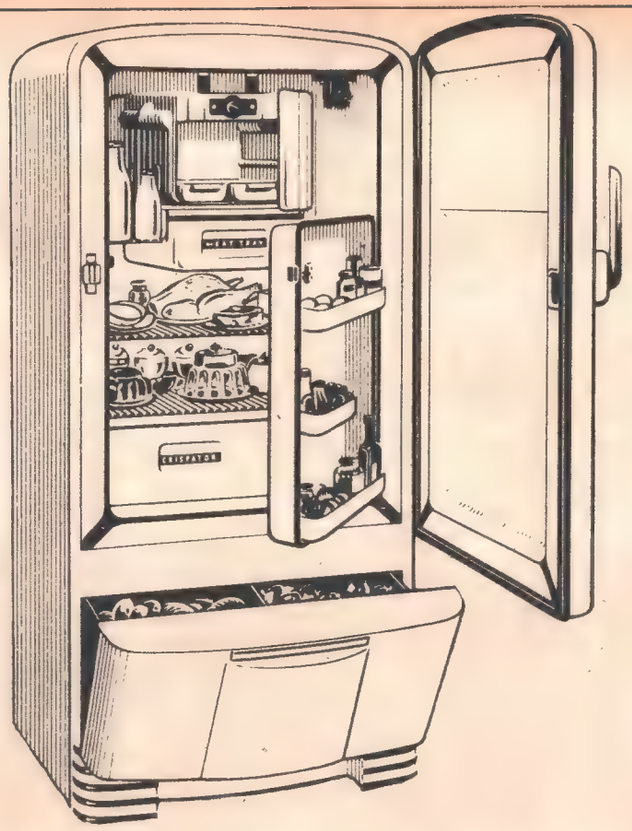
And Ah Ton dreamed of the superpalatial restaurant that would quite overshadow his rival's and oust him out of business. Perhaps he would offer Che Fu Yung a job as cook. But not as number one cook. That was *his* job.

FIFTY-TWO GIFTS IN ONE!

IF you've friends overseas you should be thinking about Christmas gifts for them now. What could be more welcome than a copy of JOHN BULL every week?

For 19s. 6d. you can buy a friend abroad a year's subscription (it's 17s. 4d. to Canada). All you need do is send a postal order, with the name and address of your overseas friend—block capitals, please—to The Publishers, 57 Long Acre, London, W.C.2, who will do the rest. Mark your letter "Christmas Subscription."

Your friend will get a specially designed Christmas card in your name with the first copy. And the card will add the good news that a copy of JOHN BULL will be dispatched regularly for a year.



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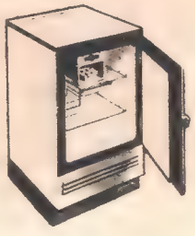
Above. Family-model S.471. Price £64 plus £15.19.10 purchase tax.



Right. Table-Top model S.311 for the smaller home. A gem of a refrigerator, built by the largest manufacturers of automatic refrigerators in Britain. *Price £45 plus £11.3.7 purchase tax.*

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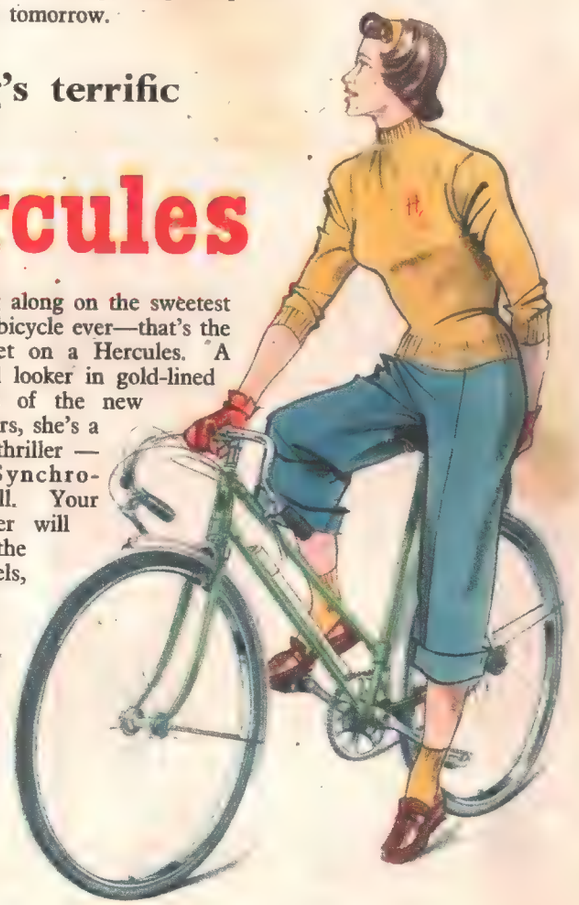
Imagine riding along on the sweetest smoothie of a bicycle ever—that's the feeling you get on a Hercules. A smashing good looker in gold-lined black, or one of the new Hercules colours, she's a three-speed thriller — handlebar Synchro-Switch an' all. Your Hercules dealer will show you the newest models, or you can see them on Stand 57 at the Cycle and Motor Cycle Show, Earls Court, Oct. 21-29.



THE HERCULES CYCLE & MOTOR CO. LTD., ASTON, BIRMINGHAM

H124

Raleigh cycle worker Nora Hayward can fit a tyre to a wheel in fifteen seconds—and without using tools

Hub of the cycling world

by IDRIS HARRINGTON

Britain exported nearly 2,000,000 cycles last year. Tall bikes for long-robed Indians, cushioned-pedal models for barefoot natives, lightweights for racers

WHENEVER Mrs. Nora Hayward sees an unlucky cyclist struggling to get a tyre on after repairing a puncture, she likes to give a hand. For most people this is a frustrating task; it takes Nora fifteen seconds.

Nora is an expert. Her job is fitting tubes and tyres in Raleigh's mammoth factory at Nottingham. She averages 500 a day.

Where her rubber-shod wheels eventually go, Nora has never yet had time to discover. Neither, for that matter, has Mrs. Darrell, working on the same job, or Bob Lee and Doreen Thompson and a dozen others putting spokes into rims, or Mr. Booth and his mates each trueing a hundred wheels a day.

In the wheel-assembly shop they consider a wheel to be the start and finish of making cycles; but as far as I could tell there seemed no one spot where the manufacture of a cycle begins. Over 1,300 components are made simultaneously in different shops, even in different factories, and come together in sub-assemblies before being combined to produce the complete machine.

Last year British firms exported 1,804,878 cycles valued at £12,767,688. This year the target is considerably higher. India is the largest single overseas customer; we sold 302,352 cycles there last year, and 173,280 in the first quarter of this year, in the face of ruthless competition from native firms.

Can't Deliver Fast Enough

Probably 600,000 cycles will go this year to various destinations in Africa. Africa is a hungry market, where it seems to be the ambition of every native to own a bicycle.

Since delivery is not quick enough for would-be owners, British manufacturers are flooded with private orders, fan mail and letters asking for catalogues. In Raleigh's advertising department I saw a pile of 200, the week's intake.

The letter on top of the pile read: "Sir: My blessings are with you knowing that you are one with the Father in Heaven and that you possess his joy, wisdom and understanding. Please kindly give me your Catalogue and the prices of the cycles. I remain, yours friendly, Amadi Uche."

Another wrote describing himself as "a boy of sixteen years old, black, i.e. dark brown in colour, 5 ft. 6 in. tall, poor yet joyous," then offered to come to England to help make his own bicycle if Raleigh paid his passage. He blessed the Big Boss Master, and signed himself, "Your Most Faithful Boy, Sunday Owen Ekhaguere."

Cycles built for boys like Sunday and Amadi are usually with cushioned pedals; they go barefooted. A taller bicycle is shipped to India. It has a twenty-eight inch wheel, compared with our standard twenty-six inch, to give more leg-room to riders whose flowing robes would trail on the ground with a smaller machine. Bicycles for Australia are shipped with handlebars turned upside down — Aussies prefer them that way.

Production begins suddenly at 9 a.m. One moment 10,000 workers are standing about in groups, smoking, talking, and the next minute a bell is clanging. Starting up, the driving belts crack like pistol shots, the machines clatter into action, and eight and a half miles of conveyor belt begin to stir into lazy, pythonic movement.

Soon, they say, you get used to the racket, the incessant presence of noise that is peculiar to each shop. In the press shop, with its 700 machines punching out chainwheels, lugs, brake fittings, brackets, lamp parts, three-speed hub shells, it is an overbearing and insistent rattle. In the forging shop it is a roaring and rasping of gas furnaces hotting steel bars, with the hum and clank of moulding machines biting off chunks of glowing bar-steel and spitting out crudely shaped gear hubs and axles.

Our Largest Auto Shop

Tipped into mobile containers, these are towed away. You follow, out of the clanking, humming, roaring, rasping cacophony, into quite suddenly an orchestrated whirling and hissing.

It is the largest auto shop in the country, latheing 3,800,000 parts a week—things like dynohub shells, ball-race cups, axles, and all the nameless nuts and screws falling like hail into wooden boxes under the machines.

Above, in the machine shop, the making of gears is barely a shuttling whisper by comparison. And as you step into the long three-speed assembly room, you've almost stepped into a silent film, one of the earlier ones, with a row of nimble-fingered women building up a chain of three-speed gears at a frantic pace.

But in the tinsmiths' shop the noise is again above and around you, screeching and pattering, as mudguards are being rolled out and cut from coiled steel strip, the stays and fittings being spot-welded on to the mudguard blade. And in the clanking, banging tube shop, lengths of steel strip are being forced slowly into the tube pattern by a system of dies and formers.

It's A Man's Job

The traffic swings by — of cycle frames pegged into brackets before being dip-brazed in molten brass and hooked back on the conveyor belt, glowing hot, on the way to being rust-proofed with phosphate solution.

Nearly every job in this shop is a man's job—a job for men who like it, who all own bikes and ride them hard. Here is where handlebars are bent, machine after machine, until eventually they begin to look like the inverted horns of a goat, the design much favoured by club cyclists who ride for speed.

Mention design to Mr. Buxton and he will say: "Cycle design has hardly changed since 1885, the year of the safety cycle, the first rear wheel chain-driven Rover." In 1938 American experts were invited to Britain to advise on the streamlining of our machines. They put their heads

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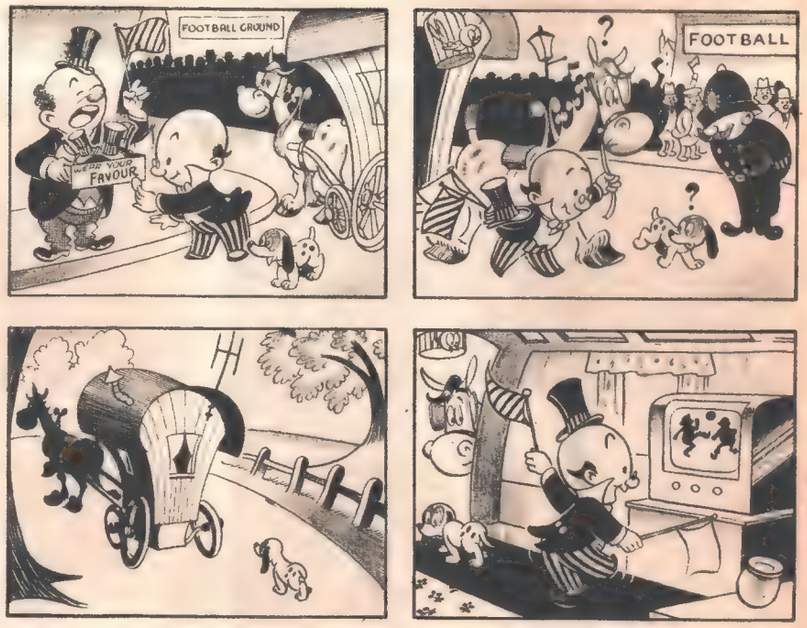
A. B. PHILLIPS & CO. LTD., CREDENDA WORKS, SMETHWICK, BIRMINGHAM

MR. DIMPLE

by David Hand



HUB OF THE CYCLING WORLD

Continued from previous page

together, but all they could suggest was a zip-fastener on the tool bag.

Buxton is head of the drawing office and responsible for the design of every nut, spoke and frame that comprise some 800 variations of Raleigh, Rudge, Humber and Robin Hood cycles wheeling out of the factory at the rate of five a minute.

But Buxton is reticent. Reluctantly he is provoked into remembering his past designs of curiously shaped cycles for circus performers, tandems, folding paratrooper cycles; today he is concerned with standard models, because design is now only focused on refinements—internal-expanding brakes, dynohubs, front fork locks to beat 20,000 cycle thieves a year, brazed-up back stays and the like.

Ready For Inspection

When all parts have been finished off ready for final assembly, they are sent to the bracket shop.

Here a ticket is tied to each frame, indicating the future cycle's model, make and fittings. With each frame labelled, things like cranks, chainwheels, pedals, front forks, mudguards, wheels, handlebars, gearcases start to appear on the frames as they pass from bench to bench, and soon the complete machine swings, pausing, before Inspector H. Wheatcroft.

Wheatcroft reads the ticket, checks to see that the machine is the model it was intended to be, then runs his hand over it, "feeling" whether it is perfect or not.

The cranks are solid, the brakes act, there are no dents. Wheatcroft is satisfied; he lets the tourer go on its way, out to the girls at the end of the assembly who hook it off the conveyer belt and swathe it with wrapping paper.

By the time a cycle comes under Wheatcroft's scrutiny, its components have had to travel past some 450 inspectors.

For faults that cannot be detected by the naked eye, there is the research laboratory of the chief metallurgist, Mr. T. Parry. His job consists of subjecting cycle parts to the toughest treatment and recording the way they stand up to it. Frames and forks are buckled by massive sledgehammers, sprayed for hours with salt water, dipped in acid, fitted to machines that vibrate them for 200 hours on end.

This insistence on perfection is the guarantee that is paying dividends all over the world. Overseas buyers are clamouring for British cycles; manufacturers like Hercules, Raleigh, B.S.A., and a dozen smaller firms, are working all out to meet orders like the one for £5,000,000 placed after the last cycle show in London.

Few experts know more about the home market than D. D. McLachlan, of Hercules, and he has summarized it as follows: "One—every boy and girl is born wanting a cycle. Two—a very small proportion is sold to persons over twenty-five years of age. Three—scarcely any woman buys a cycle after she marries. Four—ardent club cyclists form a total of less than a quarter of a million out of a cycling public of twelve million. Five—most of the remainder buy cycles to go to work on, though many still use these also for weekend recreation."

Cycling is certainly the cheapest form of travel, including walking. Ridden for its normal life, and allowing for replacements and maintenance, the average £20 machine will give nineteen miles for a penny.

With care a cycle may give even better service. A modicum of oil applied in the right spots makes all the difference. "Though," says Mr. Ainsworth, of Raleigh's service department, "it's amazing how many people ride their cycles for years without lubrication."

Test Cyclist

He leads the way to the factory museum and points to what looks like just an ordinary bike. "That was built in 1898," he goes on. "Somebody in the firm spotted it on the road and we bought it back from the owner."

"Fifty-one years old!" H. H. Pickersgill takes up the story. "And that bike runs as smooth as a bird." Pickersgill rides cycles on the road and reports their behaviour under all conditions. This is his job. He averages eighty miles a day.

"What do you do in your spare time?" I ask.

"Well," he says, "I take my own cycle out of the shed and get back on the road. I try to do 200 miles over the weekend."

HANGOVER HOUSE

Continued from page 12

cars had groped past Storm Kennedy before, at last, he came upon a sort of neglected, weed-grown courtyard into which, from a porch, light streamed bravely. It was absorbed, deadened, by a curtain of slowly moving vapour which it failed to pierce. His headlights swung through the gates. Several parked cars were visible in the mist.

He hurried into a barely furnished entrance hall. It was hazy with fog. Uncarpeted stairs swept upward into the shadows. Somewhere, a piano was tinkling. There was no one in sight until a door opened and Peter Faraway came in, one lock of reddish-brown hair hanging down on his forehead, his face pale and his eyes looking out of focus.

PETER had his arm around a shapely platinum blonde. She was wearing a green evening frock obviously designed to show that she was artistically and expensively sun-tanned all over.

"Hallo, hallo! hallo!" he hailed. "Here's dear ol' Bill Kennedy."

"Hallo, Peter. Have you seen Hilary Bruton?"

"Have I seen her? Certainly—seen her. Five minutes ago. You should keep 'n eye on girl friends, ol' soul. Have you seen m' wife?"

"No."

"Well—meet fiancée." He towed the blonde forward. "This is Sidonia."

"How d'you do?" said Kennedy, shortly.

"She's very sidonious—don't you agree? Come on, Sidonia." He dragged her away, then turned. "If you *should* see m' wife—Jo-Jo-Joan, that is—lemme know, dear old. . . ."

But Kennedy had turned abruptly. He headed in the direction of the tinkling piano, beyond the door opened by Peter.

He discovered a long, lofty apartment, beamed and panelled with time-blackened oak. At the far end he saw a gallery supported by massive pillars. Trestle tables piled in one corner showed where the temporary bar had been, and under the gallery stood a grand piano. Four tall french windows, wide open, admitted fog from a weed-grown terrace.

A square woman wearing a dress not unlike some sort of uniform, was smoking a very long cigarette as though it had been a cigar. She leaned on the piano beside a blond, bespectacled young man, listening, without enthusiasm, to the appalling playing of a brunette who, from where Kennedy stood, looked quite naked.

Recalling Sidonia, Kennedy concluded that Joan's guests had ideas of their own on the subject of "austerity."

There was no one else in the long gloomy hall, in which most of the lights had been switched off.

Kennedy withdrew, unnoticed. Peter and the blonde had disappeared, presumably in the fog. He paused for a moment, irresolute. The piano player finished on an excruciating discord. Glancing about the lobby, he crossed and looked along a dim passage. He decided to explore.

He passed a door marked "Private" and then another bearing a notice, "Powder Room." He went ahead, opened a third door at the far end, and was met by a barrage of fog.

He found himself out on a narrow terrace.

No one was in sight. But he thought that a vague shape, real or imaginary, merged into the shadows of an arched opening on his left. He dismissed the idea as a fog mirage, but walked along quietly, and looked through the arch. It led to some steps, which he descended, to find himself at the end of the main terrace.

Near by he saw a partly open, draped window. He pushed it wider and drew the drapes aside, looking into that strange museum-room. Only one lamp was alight. There was no one in the room.

Proceeding farther, he paused by the first of the big windows and looked into the panelled hall. The musical trio had dispersed. Both women were gone. The fair-haired man was inspecting a brigade of bottles paraded on a trestle table, evidently hoping to find one that had something in it.

Storm Kennedy swore. Whatever had brought Hilary to this lunatic party on such a night had already happened, and she was gone. He was too late. He stepped into the room. The fair man turned and peered at him.

"Can you tell me if Lady Hilary Bruton is still here?" Kennedy asked.

"Er—I'm afraid, sir, I don't know Lady Hilary Bruton."

"Sorry."

KENNEDY crossed the floor and went into the now empty lobby. He glanced up the uncarpeted stairs. Landings to right and left, above, were unlighted. He was about to go outside, when a sound of firm, approaching footsteps made him change his mind. He turned, and saw the square woman bearing down upon him like a destroyer.

"I don't know who you are," she announced gruffly. "But have you seen Hilary?"

"The very question I was about to ask you. My name is Storm Kennedy."

"I'm Elphinstowe," snapped the lady. "Amelia Elphinstowe. Hilary's aunt. Where the devil is she?"

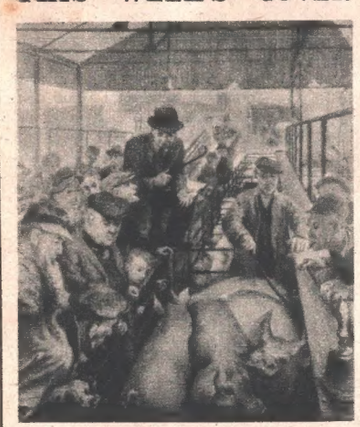
"Suppose," said Kennedy, "you tell me when and where you saw her last?"

"Powder room. Along that passage. We were getting ready to leave. Ten minutes ago."

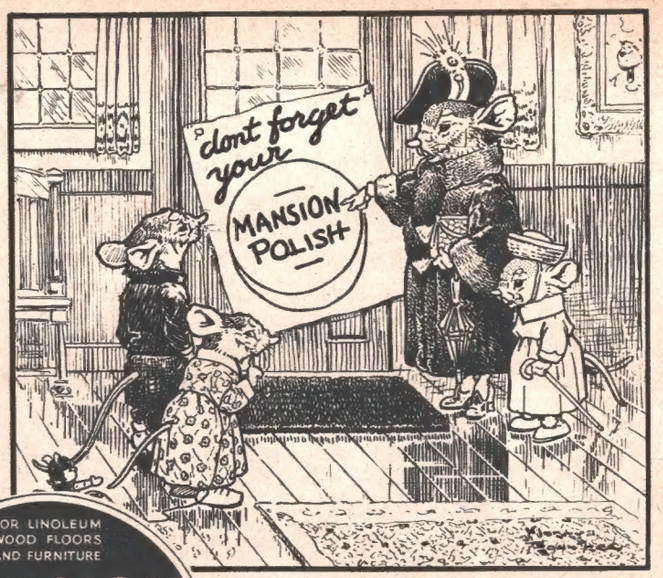
"Let's go and look again," he suggested; then, recognizing the necessity of covering the real purpose of his visit, he added: "I turned up very late, and thought I might be useful as a fog guide."

The small, oak-panelled room was

THIS WEEK'S COVER



ALTHOUGH born and brought up in a Yorkshire mining area, cover artist W. E. Narraway is a countryman at heart. For years he has lived in a Surrey village and says he is chiefly interested in painting the ordinary people of the countryside. Into this picture, sketched at a mid-morning pig market, he has introduced some of the rural types he knows so well—the shrewd, thoughtful, stolid men who are slow to act but seldom make a mistake. As well as being a painter—he exhibits regularly at the Royal Academy—Narraway is an accomplished wood carver—and an eager gardener.



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2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee, enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests in *Bulletin* and *Gazette* dated Nov. 19 and in JOHN BULL dated Nov. 26, also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

ADD 2, 3 or 4 WORDS to any of these "EXAMPLES"

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* on right. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

Man Of The Future	Carried Away
Peace In Industry	Bit Of A Rebel
Stalin's Band	When Darkness Fell
Cut The Red Tape And	"Lucky Dog!"
All Parties	Nothing To Shout About
In Matrimony's School	
Hidden Gold	**Incomplete "Examples" —see instructions**
A Bombshell	
With Skill And Grit	Waiting For The.....
Senseless	Gets No.....
To Make It Last	In Auntie's.....
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Before The Flood	As Much As We.....
He's A Nice Chap, But	

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FIVE £100 SHARERS (differing at one point only from competitors' Answers above): A. C. Adams, 40 Central Avenue, Prestatyn, Flints; Mrs. A. C. Goodall, "Selworthy," 5 Park Road, Woking; H. W. Hirst, 33 Madrid Road, London, S.W.13; Mrs. E. Ricks, "The Retreat," Bonsey Lane, Westfield, Woking; Mrs. R. White, 137 Lindbergh Road, Ipswich, Suffolk. In addition, each Winner receives a 20-lb. Food Parcel.

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For 10 winners of £2 10s., see last week's *"Bullets" Bulletin*.

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THIS WAY TO WIN

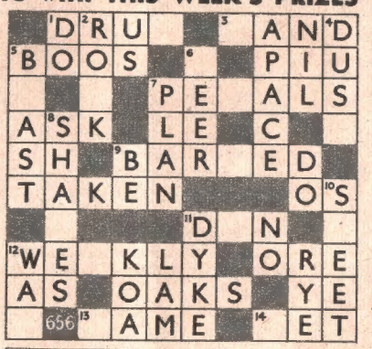
FIRST complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues on right. Then, if you wish to enter *one* extra Answer to any *one, two or three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

Across Clues **XWORD 656**

1. Even the best teachers of children find they are compelled to do this sometimes
3. May appear to have touch of magic
7. If these are not just right, competitor may be robbed of first prize
9. Wood that is this probably looks all the more attractive
11. One now and again begins a slanging match
12. Describes many journals precisely
13. It has been said that it's poor sport to go shooting such birds
14. Many more have this on when one of the big horseraces is being run

Down Clues

2. May split because of pressure or of sudden blow
4. Motoring in this can be very trying to driver
5. Can be quite harmful on occasions
6. Number of points may have to be taken into account when weighing up merits of
8. If a man's afraid, it often affects the way he does this
10. This may be really cold, even in summer
12. It's probably wise to retrace your steps if you've lost



MORE XMAS FEASTS with THIS WEEK'S PRIZES

In adjudication, all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed Square with one extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.), Square with one extra Answer to *two* Clues will represent *four* full Squares (Entry-fee 1s.), and Square with one extra Answer to *three* Clues will represent *eight* full Squares (Entry-fee 2s.). Use ink, not pencil.

Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps, covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated November 12.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature below is agreement to Rules.

CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
No.		6d.
No.		1s.
No.		2s.

(Total fee shown includes entry on Square)

I enclose P.O. value.....

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656 Closing Postmark MON., OCT. 31

HANGOVER HOUSE

Continued from previous page

empty. That doorway which opened on a corner of the terrace was closed. As they returned to the dark passage, Kennedy asked: "What's in here?"

He was standing looking at the notice "Private" when the door burst open and Hilary ran out. Even in that half-light, he could see that she was unnaturally pale. She stopped dead, looking at them.

"Thank God!" said Miss Elphinstowe in a deep voice. "You gave me a shocking fright, dear. Mr. Storm Kennedy has come to rescue us."

To Kennedy it was obvious that Hilary was taxed to the limit of her endurance. He had to admire the way in which she held out a hand that shook only very slightly and spoke in a controlled voice.

"I'm so glad to see you. Will you excuse me for just ten minutes? Come with me, Elfie?"

Kennedy stood aside to let them pass. What had happened? And why had Hilary come out of that room? He opened the door, and glanced in. The interior was quite dark. He flashed a pocket torch momentarily.

IT was the room into which he had looked from the terrace—the room which resembled a museum.

There was no one there.

He walked back to the long hall, and found it deserted, fog floating among its high beams. Lighting a cigarette, he went outside — and learned that visibility was now reduced to about fifteen feet.

A muffled voice, coming from somewhere beyond and below, was shouting:

"Tallyho! Fog warning! All out! All out!"

It was Peter Faraway, down in the garden, presumably endeavouring to round up possible stragglers.

And presently, through a moving curtain of mist, he saw the erratic movements of a flashlamp. The light drew nearer. Peter was coming up the steps from the lower terrace.

Suddenly he stopped.

"God's mercy!"

The words suggested that something had sobered Peter like an icy shower. Dimly, Kennedy could see that he had set his lamp on a step and was kneeling down. He ran to him.

"What's up, Peter?"

Peter Faraway raised frightened eyes. "Look here!"

Storm Kennedy looked.

Lying half on his side on the bottom step, so that the light shone upon a ghastly, contorted face, was a man whose limbs were drawn up as if in agony, whose fists were clenched. A red patch showed on his shirt front, and lying near—so near that he might have plucked it out in his death struggle—Kennedy saw a small dagger, its jewelled hilt glittering in the rays of the lamp.

To be continued next week

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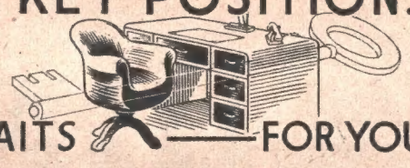

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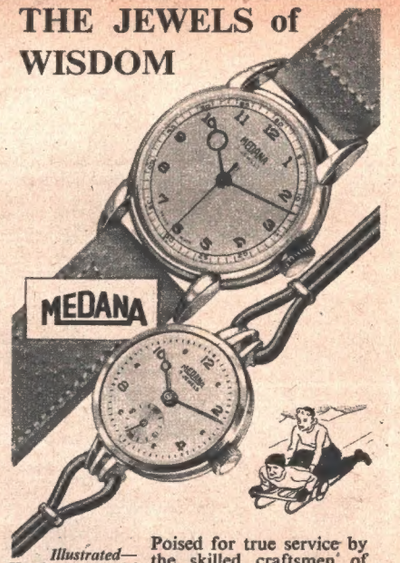

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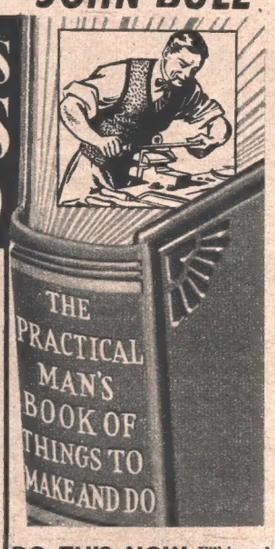

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